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**VERBATIM REPORT**  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable Patrick McNicholas*

Monday

24 March 1986

The House met at 3:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Development.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to announce to the House today that government, through the Department of Development and Tourism, has completed a process which results in the privatization of NORDCO Limited, a previously government controlled scientific research and development company. This action is part of government's ongoing efforts to privatize government owned companies wherever possible and feasible.

NORDCO Limited was incorporated in 1975 with a mandate to establish itself as a Newfoundland based company with international stature in technology applied to ice and cold oceans. At the same time the company was to act as a catalyst and encourage and assist other local companies in those areas.

In 1979, the company's mandate was revised whereby NORDCO was to increase its contract revenues from industry and government and to become a self-sufficient commercially operating firm. At that time the company began to build up a fisheries related research and development operation and pursue a number of joint venture operations.

Since 1979, NORDCO and its affiliates have generated approximately \$35 million in revenue of which an estimated 80 per cent or more has remained in the Province. Further to this is the fact that a greater proportion of those revenues generated by NORDCO came from outside the Province and represented new money in the provincial economy.

In the process the company has built up a strong body of applied engineering, research and development professionals and support staff and has begun to pursue the strategy of future growth based on its own R and D and technology transfer activities. The company presently employs eighty-five permanent staff.

The company has proposed a plan for majority ownership by the employees, designed to give NORDCO a clear private company identity and mandate, while at the same time maintaining enough government influence to keep the company in the Province and committed to its strong R and D strategy.

As part of this privatization process, government is selling 70 per cent of its interest in NORDCO to an employee group for the sum of \$200,000. In addition, to replace an eroded equity base, government has also committed to an \$800,000 equity investment in preferred shares. This arrangement will result in a new investment in NORDCO of some \$1 million.

Employee ownership of NORDCO will result in the reduction of certain inherent disadvantages of the previous ownership. It will allow a maximization of tax benefits to the company, thus allowing NORDCO

to continue its thrust in ocean related R & D. It will stabilize NORDCO's expertise base by allowing the company enough leverage to hold key personnel, who are at present in great demand as a result of increasing offshore activity. It will also enable NORDCO to seek further equity injection in order to aggressively pursue its R & D and product development objectives.

The direct advantages of employee ownership include an increased dedication and commitment on behalf of owner/staff. As well, removing government ownership will increase NORDCO's access to markets by eliminating certain bidding restrictions which government owned companies have experienced in both the public and industrial sectors. There will also be an increased opportunity for joint ventures in both the offshore and other highly technical markets.

The privatization arrangement for NORDCO will enable the company to pass from government control and fully enter the commercial market without the danger of its ownership, and hence its operations, relocating out of the Province. The share purchase was offered to all employees and resulted in 67 of the 85 NORDCO employees taking advantage of the offer with no individual holding in excess of 17 per cent.

The future of NORDCO is bright. The company will now begin to project its' private ownership image to the market at large and assure a growth curve, taking full advantage of offshore and defense market objectives.

It is anticipated that NORDCO will continue to generate subcontracts

in the offshore sector through its strong local technical base, and will also be able to attract defense subcontracting work to the Province.

In its five year business plan NORDCO foresees a diversified market base which will include commercial and defense products, offshore exploration and development, and fish harvesting and aquaculture projects.

This government has been instrumental in the development of NORDCO into a world class organization which has enhanced the reputation of Newfoundland and Labrador in cold oceans research and development. It is now time for NORDCO to go it alone and reap the benefits that only a privately owned company can in the world markets that they pursue. NORDCO has well positioned itself to grow in the challenging and extremely competitive research and development environment, and the R & D business community and the Province will reap great rewards from their future efforts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the Minister of Development and Tourism (Mr. Barrett) for getting a copy of his statement to me an hour or so ago so I had a chance to peruse it. NORDCO was a brilliant idea that has proved, since its inception, to be equally as brilliant in

reality as it was in concept. The concept was one that was shepherded through by the now Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry).

In his statement to the House at that time, Mr. Speaker, back in 1975, he gave an undertaking that it was his intention to see the company privatized in due course. Mr. Speaker, it is gratifying that the government has followed through on at least one of his undertakings during his time as part of that administration and, Mr. Speaker, if only that same government could show that same kind of follow-through on the labour dispute, we would have a solution reasonably quickly.

Mr. Speaker, it is a good company. It is a company with a good track record, a company that has attracted some expertise among its employees, employees who since that time, 1975, have made quite a contribution to helping the company fulfill its mandate of becoming a firm of international stature in terms of technology applied to ice and cold oceans. So we are pleased that the time had come to privatize.

The minister's statement is silent on a couple of points and I will raise these as questions which can be responded to at some point down the road. The statement is silent on this point: The same procedure that was followed two or three years ago in relation to the proposed sale of the Marystown Shipyard, which sale was not followed through on, we would assume that same procedure was followed, that a divestiture package was prepared. After all, we are dealing here not only with the interest of employees whose efforts we have saluted but also

with taxpayers' money, and we would assume that a divestiture package was prepared, that bids were invited and received, and that the individuals who are getting 70 per cent of the interest of NORDCO are getting it as a result of that particular process. That would be the normal course of events given that we are dealing here with public monies.

The top of page three of the minister's statement also raises a question in that by implication the total share value of the company would appear to be about \$300,000, in round figures, yet in that statement he says that government is now laying out about \$800,000 equity investment, equity worth more than twice, almost three times the share value of the company. I realize he is taking that up on behalf of the government in preferred shares, but there is an interesting proportion there, Mr. Speaker, and one wonders how effective the divestiture is when government's interest in it is fully two and a half times the share value of the company. That having been said, Mr. Speaker, we do not want to detract from the principle of the minister's statement that divestiture has been undertaken, at least in form, whether in substance remains to be seen.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues I would salute the government's efforts here in following through on some very good intentions, resulting in privatization of one Crown corporation and, as I said earlier, if they could apply that same kind of follow-through to this labour dispute, a lot of us would be much happier than we are here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier which statement is correct. Is it his statement where he said last week in this House that government was still at the bargaining table, or is it the statement of Treasury Board that they will not go to the bargaining table until the workers now on the picket line go back to work?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to get into a battle over words as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) would want me to. All I can say is that as of this moment there are exploratory talks underway between the government as the employer and the individuals representing NAPE. They have met this morning a couple of times and will be meeting again later this evening. Any comment that I would make, I think, if I use a certain adjective, adverb, verb, noun or whatever it happens to be, will only tend to lead to an interpretation which may not be the one that I intended the word to mean. I am going to have nothing to say on the matter. We are trying to resolve the situation, we are putting our best foot forward. We are working hard to resolve the present problem and therefore I think we should leave it at that until we see how the exploratory talks go.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier which statement is true. Is it the Premier's statement as carried in the government advertisement that the cost of parity would be \$140 million or is it the union's statement that the cost of parity would be only approximately \$19 million?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
It is obvious that the Leader of the Opposition would like to sabotage these exploratory talks. He wants me to get into debate here today over it. The matter is being talked about between representatives representing government and people representing NAPE and therefore I am going to have nothing to say, I am not going to get into any opinions whatsoever or interpretations of what has been said. I am going to try to put my best foot forward to give the best opportunity for there to be success in the talks that are now going ahead.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

I am sure the Premier does not mean to suggest that the hon. Leader of the Opposition wishes to sabotage anything that is going on. That matter did crop up the last day so I would ask the hon. the Premier if maybe he would like to clarify that?

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition would wish that these talks failed.

MR. TULK:  
Is that withdrawing, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:  
It is not even worth raising a point of order on. It is imputing motives to a member of this House, Mr. Speaker, which the Premier knows is against the rules, but the Premier when he is in a tight spot tends to find that he has to push the rules in order to operate. I would like to ask the Premier does he intend to attempt to evade responsibility for the fact that we have employees working for his administration who are earning less than the minimum wage? A former Tory called me up the other day, Mr. Speaker, to point out that he has two sisters, one in the Health Service earning \$3,000 more than a sister in the General Service. I would like to ask the Premier -

MR. MARSHALL:  
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:  
Mr. Speaker, since we are enforcing the rules I draw to Your Honour's attention Page 129 of Beauchesne, "a question must not (c) multiply, with slight variations, a similar question on the same point," and (d) repeat in substance a question already answered."

I would also draw to your attention Your Honour's admonition to all members of this House, including the Leader of the Opposition, to the effect that

supplementary questions are supplementary questions and not to be preceded by speeches.

MR. BARRY:  
To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Speaker, we have a Premier in this House stand up and say that he does not want to make any statements that may prejudice the dispute when he uses the taxpayers' dollars for double full page ads, Mr. Speaker, putting out political propaganda to put pressure on the workers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:  
Now, if he is prepared to make statements in paid political ads, why is he not prepared to make statements here in this House?

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no need for a supplementary question to have a preamble. So I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition if he would pose his question.

MR. MARSHALL:  
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:  
The hon. gentleman was up on a point of order a moment ago and really what the hon. gentleman was

doing was repeating, in substance, the very same thing. He has entered into a temper tantrum. The hon. gentleman is not very sedate but obviously he needs to be sedated.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

If the member for St. John's East, the Government House Leader, would go out he would see his fellow Newfoundlanders out there in the sleet and the slush and the rain, and they have been out there now for several weeks, while he is sitting in his nice dry office, Mr. Speaker, drafting advertisements for The Evening Telegram and other newspapers to make statements on the strike. Now, why will they not make them in the House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I do not think there was a point of order raised at all the second time. I gave my reply to the original point of order, that a supplementary did not need any elaboration. Quite frankly I did not see a second point of order. As far as I am concerned there was no point of order the second time.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

I would like to ask the Premier whether he would admit that there

is a basic injustice right now in the fact, as pointed out by a caller to me a couple of nights ago, who has two sisters, one working in the General Service and one in the Health Service and The one in the Health Service is earning \$3,000 a year more, Mr. Speaker, for doing the same work? Now does not the Premier consider there is a basic injustice when we have a system where right throughout the service there is this type of inequity, this type of lack of parity exists? Would the Premier address that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we have said in the past, the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) and other members representing the government, that parity is an issue which we are prepared to address, and we are eager to do that. We have said that, and we want to see eliminated the inequities that are inherent in the system, due to various factors beyond the control of the union and beyond the control of government over the last five or six years as different contracts expired at different times under different circumstances. We recognize that, have recognized it, do recognize it today, and want to eliminate it.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Speaker, I compliment the Premier for that statement, for that answer. That, Mr. Speaker,

is addressing the question and that, Mr. Speaker, is showing some move towards conciliation. But I would like to ask the Premier, if he really wants to make a breakthrough in this strike and get these workers back to work as quickly as possible, has he considered - and it is completely within his power; the courts are not involved, nobody else involved - has he considered revoking this decision to impose a thirty day suspension? It is a barrier to getting the talks going. It would be a sign of good faith and I would say, Mr. Speaker, it would be a very strong inducement to letting the President of NAPE see that the Premier is serious and might even lead the union to committing itself to go back to work when it saw that sign of good faith. Would the Premier consider that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Now the Leader of the Opposition knows I could answer the question on parity as a point of principle, and we as a government want to move to wipe out the disparities that now exist between individuals in the Public Service who are doing the same work yet they are not getting the same money. That is an inequity that has to be solved. There is no question about that. Everybody understands that, knows that it has to occur. In the final offer that was put before talks broke off that is what we were trying to do. We made it a basic policy, a tenet of government, this year about three or four months ago, through Cabinet, that the workers in the

General Service and MOS must get a higher increase than other workers who now are getting more money yet are doing the same work. No question about that. We established that principle months ago. On the question the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) just asked, I cannot give him a direct answer to that. Talks are ongoing and obviously there are a whole range of factors that are going to enter into the matter of these present talks being successful. So for me to say anything here today is being very unfair to the people. The President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard) just left, and are going back to talk again tonight. Obviously there is a range of issues being looked at from government's point of view and from the union's point of view. For me to get into -

MR. TULK:  
Why did you not get talks going this weekend?

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
Look, boy, we have got negotiations ongoing, we have got talks ongoing with the union.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:  
I am not going to negotiate in public and the union agreed this morning neither are they. The ministers and the people representing the union have undertaken to say nothing about the talks and, therefore, if I say anything now on an issue like suspensions and get into that, I am thereby violating an agreement that has been made by the President of Treasury Board, the Minister of Labour and the people representing NAPE.



MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:  
We could assume therefore, Mr. Speaker, that some villain in the piece has run those ads on radio and in the paper. The Premier is not responsible but somebody out there is doing it unknown to him.

Mr. Speaker, a message - yes, a message too, I guess - but a question for the Minister of Justice (Ms Verge). Last week she pleaded ignorance on the substance of that injunction. She knows full well, of course, that the Treasury Board people who sought the injunction did so on the advice and with the direct use of a lawyer from her department, and I find it passing strange that she would not personally, as minister, be aware of the provision of that injunction, if not the actual wording. Does she now, then, Mr. Speaker, want to take the opportunity to rephrase for the benefit of the members of the House and the public the misleading statement she made to the House last week in which she said she was not aware of the substance of the injunction at that time?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:  
Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the member opposite, and I take it the editor of The Evening Telegram, do not recall accurately what I did say in the House of Assembly last week. I have a copy of Hansard here. What I said at the time, and what I will reiterate

now, is that that is a technical legal question, it is a matter of legal interpretation. Of course I am aware of the interim injunction that was issued, but the meaning of that injunction is not a matter that necessarily is one of black or white, yes or no. In any case it is not admissible according to the rules of procedure, according to Beauchesne, for the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to disclose in the House of Assembly advise given to departments of government. So I reiterate what I said last week; it is on the record, copies of Hansard are available to all members. Besides, as the Premier has indicated, the government is involved in exploratory talks with the union and no comment will be made by members on this side on any of these matters which may, in any way, jeopardize talks or violate the agreement that has been made with the union to give the talks the best possible chance of success so that the dispute may be resolved.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:  
We are not looking for legal advice. We understand the parameters in that respect. We are looking to the minister to respond, to answer to the House for matters within her jurisdiction. Now there is nothing complicated, Mr. Speaker, about this injunction. It says, "NAPE, its members." General Service people are members of NAPE. I do not know why she persists in this, Mr. Speaker. Who is she trying to fool, herself

or somebody else? This is a very clear matter. She knows full well that the skating that was done last week was for political purposes. Why is she part of it? Where is the zeal that brought her into politics to protect interest groups? Suddenly she is allowing a very large interest group down there to be trodden on by an unfair application of the law.

MR. MARSHALL:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

I want to refer Your Honour to page 130 of Beauchesne where it says it is out of order, under paragraph (m), to "ask solution of a legal proposition, such as interpretation of a Statute, a Minister's own powers, etc." Clearly what the hon. gentleman is asking for is an interpretation of an injunction. That injunction is an order given by the court. The interpretation of that order and that injunction is clearly within the purview of the court and not within the purview of the minister. It would be, Mr. Speaker, I think infringing very much into the areas of the jurisdiction of the court, and I submit that it is completely and absolutely and patently out of order.

MR. BARRY:

To that point of order very briefly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

The thrust of the question is what was the intention of government, who was it intended to cover when they said, "All the members of NAPE"? Who was it intended that the minister's solicitor would have that injunction cover when the Department of Justice's solicitor drafted it? Was it intended to cover all the members of NAPE or only some of the members of NAPE?

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, I am reading the particular reference of the hon. the President of the Council. It does appear to me that what the hon. member is asking is a legal question that in this case would be out of order. But maybe he would like to reword his question in some other way.

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, again I maintain I am not asking any question relating to the legal. The injunction, which I am prepared to table, identifies NAPE as the defendant and then later says "its members." "Its members," not some of its members. Now the question stands. My colleague from Mount Scio, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry), put it. The minister, as part of her responsibilities, must know what was the intention of government in seeking that injunction. What was the intention of government? is my question to her. What was the intention in seeking that injunction, and was the injunction intended to cover the General Service, as would be quite apparent from the wording of the injunction?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the member is persisting and repeating the same question over and over again. He is persisting in trying to elicit from me legal opinions given to other branches of government, is persisting in trying to elicit from me answers on matters that are currently before the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland. I have made my position clear, which is that these are complicated legal questions, matters of opinion, matters ultimately for the courts to rule on. This particular matter is still before the Chief Justice of the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and it will be dealt with by him in a hearing scheduled for tomorrow morning, and for all of those reasons I have nothing further to say to the House on that matter.

MR. SIMMONS:

One further supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

One further supplementary, the hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

I will stay clear of the legalities altogether and I will ask a very different question, Mr. Speaker, bearing directly on that minister's responsibility. The question is this: Why did she last week stand idly by while the law was being unfairly, inequitably applied to different groups of NAPE? Why was she party

through her silence to allowing some people to be arrested who should never have been arrested, and then a different interpretation made the following day so that there were no arrests? There should have been none at all. Why did she, a champion of minority rights in terms of her credentials in the past, stand idly by and allow that travesty to be perpetrated on people?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, there was no inconsistency in application last week. There is on the record an interim injunction which was sought and given by the court when one set of circumstances pertained, when one bargaining unit was conducting an unlawful strike. Circumstances changed. There was no inconsistency in the actions taken by the Crown or the law enforcement officers of the Crown last week.

The interim injunction which was issued by the court is still outstanding. It will be dealt with by the court tomorrow and in future, and on that matter I have nothing more to say.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

My question would be to the Minister of Labour, and it has to do with the whole question of legal and illegal strikes and the appropriateness of whether or not

negotiations should occur when that occurs. And calling on his vast number of years of experience in the Department of Labour, both here in this Province and what he knows that has gone on in other provinces, my question to him is, does he know of any instances where we have had illegal strikes, technically or otherwise, in which actual negotiations have occurred prior to these individuals going back to work?

MR. BLANCHARD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:  
Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Menihek for the question. I am not aware of any illegal strikes, Mr. Speaker, where the Department of Labour has stepped in and actually gotten back to the bargaining table while the illegal strike was in progress. Now there may be shades of definition to that, Mr. Speaker. A case has been quoted over the last few days where negotiations of a sort occurred, it depends I guess on the strict interpretation of negotiations, but I have never participated, Mr. Speaker, in face to face negotiations with the two parties present where an illegal strike was in progress.

MR. FENWICK:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker..

MR. SPEAKER:  
A supplementary, the hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:  
I have a list here, I am not going to go through too many of them, but I can refer, for example, to

postal workers, prior to the time they got collective bargaining rights in the late 1960s, on the federal level, the trawlermen's strike in the middle 1970s, and hospital strikes in this Province, prior to legitimization of the collective bargaining relationship, in which there appears to have been illegal strikes when negotiations occurred. But the one that sticks out is the one -

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. FENWICK:  
Mr. Speaker, we are in a position here where we have a Gordian knot that someone has to cut, and my question is to the Minister of Labour. Since you have already said that negotiations of a sort have occurred in what were technically illegal strikes, can I then ask the Minister of Labour if he will encourage negotiations of a sort to occur here prior to the people going back to work?

MR. BLANCHARD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Minister of Labour.

MR. BLANCHARD:  
Mr. Speaker, the talks that we are currently in, the exploratory talks we are having with representatives of NAPE over the last three or four days, are precisely the kinds of things that I had in mind and referred to, where you get down, Mr. Speaker, and try to work out an accommodation to get back to the table, where the parties will go back, a set of circumstances under which the employees will go back to work, the same precise thing as the President of Treasury Board

and myself have been doing since last Friday.

MR. CALLAN:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:  
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe). Could the minister indicate - he probably does not have up-to-date information and it is difficult to tell, I know, whether an accident on the highway was caused because the MOS workers were out and so on - approximately how many vehicle accidents have occurred on our province's highways as a result of the action taken by the MOS workers approximately three weeks ago?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE:  
Mr. Speaker, in the member's preamble he identified correctly that that would be virtually impossible for me to say as it relates to the number of accidents that have occurred. I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that unlike the member opposite I would not suggest that any accident was caused by either the action or the inaction of people operating in this Province, whether it be the MOS or the management staff who are manning the equipment. I would suggest that perhaps the member is treading on somewhat dangerous ground if he is accusing the MOS of causing some accidents.

MR. CALLAN:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN:  
Mr. Speaker, somebody asked a question last week, and the minister opposite thought it was a low question, about how much money is being saved as a result of this strike. Last year the government saved \$23 million as a result of the teachers strike. The minister just gave a low answer, Mr. Speaker. He knows what I am suggesting is that the lack of snow and ice control may cause accidents.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):  
Order, please! The hon. member is making a speech.

MR. CALLAN:  
Let me ask the Minister of Education (Mr Hearn) a question, Mr. Speaker. The minister knows as well as I do that there are countless numbers of school bus operators who refuse to operate because of the lack of proper control of ice and snow conditions. Does the Minister of Education have a figure of how many pupil-days, for example, have been lost in our schools as a result of the poor control of ice and snow as a result of the walkout?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HEARN:  
Mr. Speaker, we have been made aware that two areas of the Province have had school closures because of road conditions. Whether or not that is because there is a strike underway right now is hard to say, because there have been many days during many Winters when schools in certain areas have been closed because of storms or ice conditions. There

is no way that we could determine how many days have been lost because people are on strike.

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the President of Treasury Board. In view of the ever increasing delicacy of this labour dispute, and in view of contradictory remarks from the Premier and the Minister of Labour and the President of Treasury Board himself, I wonder if the President of Treasury Board could indicate whether the initiative on Friday by himself and by the Minister of Labour to start exploratory talks with NAPE had the full support, the full endorsement, of Cabinet?

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. WINDSOR:  
Mr. Speaker, outside of the fact that that question is somewhat improper and it does not deal really with an area of responsibility of my portfolio, I want to say to the hon. gentleman that I know that he does not want to do anything or say anything that would impact on our ability to continue with these exploratory talks and to reach an agreement to return to the bargaining table. So I am going to protect him from himself, Mr. Speaker, and say to him that obviously I cannot answer that question.

MR. LUSH:  
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:  
Mr. Speaker, on Friday, in response to a question from the media as to whether this initiative had the support of the Premier, the President of Treasury Board answered, "No comment." In view of that answer that he gave the press of no comment, I am wondering whether he can indicate whether or not the initiative, the exploratory talks, did have the support of the Premier or does it mean that there is a lack of purpose and a lack of direction or, much worse, that there is a lack of uniformity or a lack of political -

MR. MARSHALL:  
A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:  
Number one, the hon. gentleman is going into a long speech. I realize he cannot help that, that is endemic to his nature. But the next thing, Mr. Speaker, the main substance of my point of order is that it is obviously completely out of order in the Cabinet system of government for the hon. gentleman to ask what were decisions of Cabinet and what were decisions of individual members of Cabinet. The hon. gentleman can be assured of this in all things, I say without equivocation, that this Cabinet and this government stand as one and unified. That is the system under which we operate in this Province and the British Parliamentary system. So it is

out of order to ask any minister a question like that.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, it does appear to the Chair that the hon. member is out of order in questioning what are Cabinet decisions.

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we have the right in this House to ask whether a certain minister is acting on behalf of government or whether he is just running off at the mouth. This is the question I was asking: In view of the minister's answer, as to whether the initiative had the support of the Premier, was "No Comment," in view of that, Sir, I am asking whether this indicated whether or not these exploratory talks had the approval of government or whether it shows, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MARSHALL:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have to say it is exactly the same question that the hon. gentleman asked. Whether the hon. gentleman asked whether this has the support of Cabinet, or he asks if it has support of government, it is one and the same, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BARRY:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Long experience in this House has shown that when a member starts getting too close to the nub the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) starts popping up. Now there are obviously some serious differences of opinion between the President of Treasury Board and the Premier and other members of Cabinet as to how to proceed, but members on this side are entitled, Mr. Speaker, to ask questions on an important matter like this to determine just exactly what is happening. Is the President of Treasury Board, Mr. Speaker, proceeding on his own bat, for example, with the thirty day suspension? Was that his brilliant idea? This is the type of thing that the member for Bonavista North (Mr. Lush) is trying to elucidate, and I think that those questions are properly in order.

MR. MARSHALL:

To that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

The only difference of opinion that has ever occurred in this Cabinet to my knowledge, to the benefit of the government and the people in Newfoundland, is the difference of opinion that occurred between the government and the former Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) and that is a matter, Mr. Speaker, that is a known fact. What the hon. gentleman is trying to do is to ask questions which are completely and absolutely out of order and he

knows it.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the hon. member should try to address his questions to a particular minister strictly on points that are in the control of his own portfolio. It is about as simple as that.

The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

MR. LUSH:

I am asking the President of Treasury Board to respond to an answer that he gave, but if he does not have control of that I do not know who does.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH:

Maybe I should ask the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) to comment upon the answer. The question is, do these exploratory talks have the approval of government? That is the question to the President of Treasury Board.

Obviously they do not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No answer.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On February 14 the Premier said in this House, and I quote, 'Mr. Speaker, when we are so insensitive as a government to suddenly not respond to what is clearly the majority opinion in this Province, then we do not deserve to be here any more.' I

want to ask the Premier will he now give his assurances that he will remove this wall which his administration has built between himself and government, or will he heed his own words, that he does not deserve to be here any more and he should resign?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The latest poll figures that have just come off the press indicate that if there was an election called today the P.C. Party would still form the Government of Newfoundland, number one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Number two, that the Leader of the Opposition is running behind his party and, number three, that I am running well ahead of my party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

In light of the Premier's answer and his confidence in his polls, will the Premier call an election today?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.



PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, when I am ready, in my time.

MR. FUREY:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A final supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

In all seriousness I would ask the Premier would he remove the threat of suspension as a sign of good faith so that we can start the healing process in this Province right away?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Talks are underway now, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to get into matters that are presently, obviously, issues which are important to the union and important to government. Let me just say to the hon. member, if I was in the hon. member's shoes I would be very, very scared because right now the NDP Party has over 21 per cent of the popular vote in this Province and the Liberal Party just a tiny bit over 30 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Presenting Reports by  
Standing and Special Committees

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas):

The hon. the Leader of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Come down and run against me.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to table copies of Minutes of Council pursuant to Section 26 (1) of the Financial Administration Act which relates to the precommitment of funds and, also, copies of Special Warrants pursuant to the Financial Administration Act.

Petitions

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Menihek.

MR. FENWICK:

Mr. Speaker, this petition is just a final kick at the cat before the Budget tomorrow. I will read the prayer of the petition because it is similar to one that I presented before, but these are new copies that have arrived since then. Sixty-eight individuals from Old Perlican and from Green's Harbour say, "we, the undersigned, petition the Provincial Government to either eliminate the 12 per cent sales tax on cable service in rural areas or else find some way of lowering it so that we do not pay a much larger amount in sales

tax on our cable service than do people in urban areas, such as St. John's, Newfoundland."

I have given the arguments before. I do not want to take up the time of the House in going over them, but it is essentially that the \$20-odd per month in rural areas means twice as high as sales tax being collected as is on the \$10 or \$11 in urban areas. It is clearly inequitable, and it is clearly something I am hoping the Minister of Finance will correct tomorrow with the Budget.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

#### Orders of the Day

MR. MARSHALL:

Motion 1, Interim Supply.

On motion that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply to consider certain Resolutions for the Granting of Interim Supply to Her Majesty, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

#### Committee of the Whole on Supply

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Carried.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Fortune-Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:

No, Mr. Chairman, this bill is

far, far from the carrying stage.

Last week I said on behalf of the Opposition when we first spoke on this Interim Supply Bill, Bill No. 18, that we were tying the passage of this bill to a settlement in the NAPE dispute. We believed the two are very directly related. We stand by our position on that, which means, Mr. Chairman, that we have at least this afternoon, and maybe many other afternoons and evenings and nights, who knows, during which to pursue some of the detail.

Mr. Chairman, we do not sense on the part of the administration any urgency to expedite the passage of this particular bill. Indeed, it is traditional in most parliamentary forums for the minister to at least do the courtesy of sitting in his seat during this particular period, to hear the concerns of the Opposition and to answer their questions.

I put some questions to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) last week on two separate occasions to which we have no answers. Next week they will be moaning and groaning I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition would not co-operate and so they, the government, are unable to pay the bills. They have the responsibility, Mr. Speaker, for dealing with that issue and I do not believe they are exercising that responsibility very well.

I keep saying, Mr. Speaker, I mean of course, Mr. Chairman. I think of Mr. Chairman as an eminent Speaker of this Chamber and in days to come, it is only a matter of time. We welcome him back. The gentleman from Humber West (Mr. Baird) did an excellent job

but we nevertheless missed the gentleman from Terra Nova (Mr. Greening).

MR. TULK:

He had better do it this term though.

MR. SIMMONS:

My friend says he had better do it this term. He is one of the men that we cultivate. We cultivate that gentleman and others. We know that this labour dispute in particular has brought to a head a number of tensions in the Tory Caucus, and I do not -

MR. TULK:

The Chairman is as fair man.

MR. DECKER:

He has Liberal leanings.

MR. SIMMONS:

He is a Liberal gone temporarily gone astray. But as I think another Premier of this Province used to say one time, "While the light holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." So I tell him to get out his old Liberal membership card and dust it off. He may have reason to use it sooner than he thinks.

We have said again and again, Mr. Chairman, that we are tying this bill and its passage to the settlement of the labour dispute. We mean that and we intend to stand by it because, Mr. Chairman, I cannot think of anything in recent times in this Province that is so blatantly unjust, that affects so many people, whether it be the MOS unit of NAPE or the General Service or NAPE members generally, or whether it be the bus drivers out there on the roads or the school children whose education is being interrupted as a ramification of this dispute. I

cannot think of any issue in this Province in recent times that has been more unjustly handled by the administration of the day or one that affects more people, thousands and tens of thousands of people, than this particular dispute. If I were a part of the government I would be day in and day out, night and day, looking for a solution and trying to find ways to minimize the aggravation.

I notice in Question Period the standard or rehearsed line is that the administration does not want to increase the aggravation but, Mr. Chairman, actions speak louder than words and for all the pious words of the Premier and the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Marshall) on this issue, look at what they did during the weekend. Just as soon as the House had risen, they rush off to OZ FM and contract for a week of radio advertising. They contract with The Evening Telegram and the lord knows who else to get advertising to pump out something that is blatantly false and proven to be false by the NAPE union. The Premier was given an opportunity to correct the record today and refused to do so. Why, Mr. Chairman? Why, because of the poll that the Premier gloats in? Members of the committee, have you noticed that even if you take the Premier's figures - I have long since learned not to take his figures - but if you take the Premier's figures, he implicitly admits that his administration has the support of less than 50 per cent because the two figures he quoted for the other parties, if you assume to be correct, total more than 50, so, by his own admission in this committee today, by implication, his administration and his party has the support of less than half the people out

there. I could have told him that a long time ago, mind you, but I have long since learned not to get too excited about the Premier's polls or particularly the Premier's recital of his polls because the last time he recited a poll that affected us was around March of 1984. His polls showed him then that the Liberals would get two to four seats, I think. He was going to have to appoint an opposition and then, of course, along came the member for Mount Pearl (Mr. Windsor). There is no need to appoint an opposition now because he has the member for Mount Pearl right at this table.

MR. BARRY:

Even the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) smiled at that one.

MR. SIMMONS:

Which proves, among other things, that the member for St. John's East does smile, a matter about which there has been some doubt.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS:

I hate to interrupt him because he is making what is surely his finest speech.

MR. TULK:

Did he say something nice?

MR. SIMMONS:

Oh, yes, he says something nice quite often and means it once in a while to.

Mr. Chairman, I do not even know if we have the ear of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) so we are going to take our time because when this ten-minute period runs out, I will get another ten minutes and several more

ten-minute periods between now and the passage of this bill. I have a lot of time. I would say more time than the government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) has on this matter although I can understand that the last thing they want to do is call the Throne Speech.

Have you noticed in recent years, Mr. Chairman, the newest convention they use? Compare it to Ottawa, Queen's Park and Westminster and you will notice that there there is a defined period. You have a Throne Speech and then the members are given five or six days during which members on the government side, backbench and members generally can air the concerns of their constituents and the direct reasons they were sent here. But what happens here?

Through orchestration by the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall), they see to it every time that the minute the Throne Speech comes in, the minute we open a new session, we have another crisis about Interim Supply and then bang-o, a budget which is already a month and a half overdue. So Interim Supply and then budget effectively preclude any up-to-date debate of the Throne Speech. They will call it next September, mind you.

MR. TULK:

Do not bet on that.

MR. SIMMONS:

That is right, do not bet on that, because they promised after a day or two of debate in the last session to call the Throne Speech but it died on the Order Paper. We never, ever completed the debate on the Throne Speech, on the Address In Reply.

Mr. Chairman, what an insult that is to the Lieutenant-Governor alone who comes here. We appoint a committee. We are suppose to give him a response just in terms of the sheer formalities. We stand in this House when we get a message from him and yet we kick the office in the teeth by not even responding to the address. We are suppose to deliver an actual Address In Reply. We can only do that when we conclude the formality of the Throne Speech Debate but, more important than the formality is the substance and we, as members of this House, have been denied during the past few years the opportunity of debating the Throne Speech for obvious reasons. The government does not particularly want held up to public scrutiny the nonsense that occurs in that particular Throne Speech. So, Mr. Chairman, since I am not going to get a chance during the Throne Speech to make my Throne Speech remarks, I might as well make them during this debate on Interim Supply.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) was at the University the other day and he read what must be the guts, the substance, of this particular Throne Speech. It is on Page 1, the third paragraph in.

MR. BARRY:

It is called fighting words.

MR. SIMMONS:

Exactly. "Perhaps one of the most positive events to occur has been the significant change in attitude brought about by the election in late 1984 of a new Government in Ottawa. A new spirit of federal - provincial understanding and co-operation has clearly emerged across the Nation since that time. We now have a Federal Government that is sensitive to

the circumstances. Acrimony has given way to harmony, etc., etc., etc."

Mr. Chairman, I cannot even read it.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. SIMMONS:

Would you just get up and say a sentence? I want to go again.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I always like to go by the policy that there should be one side and then the other side. I did not see the member. I would yield to the member for Menihek (Mr. Fenwick) but I really cannot stand this afternoon to hear two Liberals in a row, as erudite as the hon. gentleman is.

Mr. Chairman, I want to reiterate once again and I just want to make one little point. I am not going to speak for a long, long period of time, just a short period of time. If today I have to bear listening to two or three Liberals at a time, I will bear it. I have a strong stomach and I can do it.

Mr. Chairman, today we are considering Interim Supply. I do not want to prejudge the Committee or the House or anything like that because it is the House that determines these things, but if we do not get Interim Supply through Committee, what is going to happen

is, because obviously there has to be an adjournment of the House over the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Why?

MR. MARSHALL:

Do the hon. gentlemen want to sit on Good Friday or do they want to sit on Maundy Thursday? The hon. gentlemen would sit on Maundy Thursday, Holy Thursday and Private Member's Day is Wednesday. The fact of the matter is that on March 10, I would just point out again, in the great spirit of co-operation that we have shown from time to time, I wrote the hon. the beaten Liberal and I told the hon. gentleman that the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) was to bring down his budget tomorrow. As sure as night follows day, and night will follow day tomorrow, Mr. Chairman, it will be a bright day tomorrow, the Minister of Finance is going to bring down his Budget Speech.

When the hon. gentleman brings down his Budget Speech, the hon. gentlemen may not understand it. I know the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Simmons) does. It will set forth the intended expenditures and projected revenues of the government for the 1986 - 1987 year. The hon. gentlemen, I know, do not think very logically but they understand that fiscal years are different that calendar years. So from April to next March it will set down the expenditures and it will set down the revenues. Therefore, there will be before the House the complete programme of this government for the ensuing year.

Now, what is Interim Supply? It is merely just an advance on the money to enable the bills of

government to be paid while the budget is being brought down, while it is into these democratic committees that we have set up, while the Budget Speech is going on and while the normal democratic process is taking place. So I am just going to say to the hon. gentlemen, on March - and I know I am inviting the hon. gentlemen to get up and make a rain of words against me but, I am going to point it out once more to them.

I appeal to the hon. gentlemen to be reasonable. I know one of them was reasonable at one time, the hon. the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter), and I am quite sure he is still a very reasonable individual, even though he went across. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, we have to pay the members of the public service who are working in the essential services area and the management. You have to pay the hospital workers and you have to pay supplies and what have you. So, I just refer to the letter of March 10th. I will not, as some people think is sometimes my custom, heap insults on the hon. gentlemen there opposite, as enticed as I am to heap insults on them.

I will just point out that if Interim Supply does not go through today, the problem is we will not have the legislative authority from this Chamber to be able to make the necessary payments. So I would just urge the hon. gentlemen to get relevant, to get serious, to pass the Interim Supply before the day is over. Knowing that the Budget -

MR. BARRY:

Settle the strike and you got it, no settlement, no supply.

MR. MARSHALL:

The hon. gentleman says, 'Settle the strike.' The keeping open of this House is going to prolong this strike because we get here in this House and the hon. gentleman's idea of settling the strike is to have the government arrest every single person in the MOS and the General Service.

The only thing that I have been able to discern from the official opposition on this side of the House with respect to the strike is that they want us to arrest everybody. It also shows that the hon. gentleman, who is coupling the two together, takes a rather cynical attitude towards it. He is coupling the rights of the people in the Province to get paid, the hospital workers to get paid, the rights of suppliers to get paid, the necessity of continuing essential services and the hon. gentleman who has no perspective at all, an unfortunate perspective, has gotten here and he has somehow coupled them together. It is one of the reasons why we have such a difficulty in dealing efficiently with the business of this House. We are dealing with Interim Supply, now that is one thing.

MR. J. CARTER:

We are dealing with dirt bags.

MR. MARSHALL:

The strike is another matter, the legislative programme is another, the budget is another matter, the Budget Speech is another matter but the hon. gentleman wants to lump them all in together. The hon. gentleman is making a big mistake when he is doing that because it is not right. The fact of the matter is that there is a strike on. What has that got to do with Interim Supply?

He says if the strike is not settled what he is going to do, in effect, is withhold the right of people who are working day by day to get their salary cheques. He is going to risk bringing the hospitals to a halt because we cannot pay. So he wants to blackmail. Mr. Chairman, we are not going to bend to blackmail.

We respect this Committee and we respect the House. We even respect the rights of people to put Liberals in the House, as unpalatable as it is to us from time to time. That being the fact, Mr. Chairman, we would like for this to go through so that we can get Interim Supply, get on with the business of the Province, preclude the possibility of people not getting paid and hospitals not getting paid and hospital services not being able to be rendered.

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

And welfare recipients.

MR. MARSHALL:

And welfare recipients as well, as the hon. the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs just said.

If the hon. gentleman wants to couple them together in his own mind, the hon. gentlemen should not be led. The hon. gentlemen there opposite can only think of one thing. What they construct their future, airy fairy government on, and it is a theoretical one because it will never come into existence, is misery and disaster.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Barry) and his cohorts hope that the offshore is not going to occur. They hope that Labrador is not going to open up and that the markets for the

iron ore are going to go down. They hope that there will be no NATO base up there. They hope that the fishery will be a failure. They hope the squid will not come in and what they are doing now is showing their colours. They are doing exactly the same thing.

Mr. Chairman, I would be the last one in the world to try to provoke the hon. gentlemen. I would just ask them to get somebody sensible, like the hon. the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter), to get up and talk for ten minutes when I sit down so that they can reflect on it and hopefully not make drawn positions with respect to this and realize that it is necessary to pass Interim Supply, and we can get on with the rest of the business of this Province in the House, as I outlined to the Opposition House Leader in my letter of March 10.

Thank you.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):  
The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS:  
I think that bit of balm should be entitled Sweetness and Light. It is touching to see the healing hand extended, the absence of vile. It is amazing. It is touching so near Easter Sunday to have that kind of sweet charity extended to us. If we did not have the motivation we needed to be co-operative, surely we got it in the last ten minutes.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) began his remarks with these words

that I put down for posterity, as will Hansard, 'those democratic committees we have set up.' You talk about disillusion! Now the member for St. John's East wants us to understand that he is responsible for a mechanism called the Committee of the Whole, which we are in right now. What else will he take credit for? Maybe the end of the Second World War and Easter Sunday itself and so many other things. I think his book will be called *And On The Seventh Day, I Rested*. Those democratic institutious and committees that we have set up!

That is the problem, Mr. Chairman, with this whole process. The gentleman for St. John's East, the real Premier, has got such a set of blinkers on that he does not understand some of the basic realities. One of the basic realities was sent across to him some days ago when the Leader of the Opposition spoke on this issue. I repeated that reality last week. I repeated that reality about a half hour ago when I made my first remarks in this afternoon's committee, and I now repeat it again for him to hear.

No amount of sweet talk, cajoling, insulting or whatever other tactic he wants to engage in is going to dissuade us from our purpose in this particular matter. We understand full well the implications of Interim Supply not passing, we understand that. We have been around here before. We also understand the serious devastating implications of this strike continuing. We cannot get from the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) whether his initiatives have the endorsement of government or not. They hide behind the rules on that one. We do not even know if the government



has really focused on this matter. We know that they have been out taking some polls, and I assume from the Premier's respond today on polls he has been governed in terms of his approach to the strike by polls as well. That is all I can construe from what he said.

Now, Mr. Chairman, they are not -

MR. TOBIN:  
(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMONS:  
Oh, too bad, Mr. Chairman, the present Premier is not here now. He shut the member for Burin - Placentia up pretty well around three o'clock this afternoon. I wish he were here to keep him quiet now because I have some things I want to say. My people sent me here to say them. Then, if he wants to get up and say somethings, he can say them and I will listen to him in silence, as I expect him to do in my case.

Mr. Chairman, the message I want to get through to the gentleman for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) and to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), but the gentleman for St. John's East particularly, because he is the Government House Leader, responsible for the government's agenda in this House, is that we are not going to be dissuaded by cajoling or insulting or any other tactic. We are sticking by our guns on this one. The government can do what it has to do, but from out standpoint here, we are here until that strike is settled before we pass Interim Supply, before we acquiesce to the passage of Interim Supply, we are here. We have no schedules to go elsewhere, South, North, or anywhere. We are prepared to stay. We would like

to have Good Friday off, if possible. We would like to have Easter Sunday off, if possible.

MR. TULK:  
If it is necessary, we will come back Saturday and Sunday.

MR. SIMMONS:  
Mr. Chairman, we are prepared to hang her down here until this matter is resolved.

You see, Mr. Chairman, once this House rises, once this House recesses, there is one powerful lever removed from government to get on with a settlement. They do not have to face the picketers as they come into the building every day to get here. They do not have to look at picketers up in the gallery that they are paying \$13,000 a year. There was one of them there this afternoon I saw who was getting that wage. It is no secret. He was on television last week saying exactly what he was getting. Mr. Chairman, as long as the government does not have this leverage, this thing goes on and on and on, it effects more children's education and it effects the pocketbook of so many people. I can understand the rush that they may want to go places, but we are here on this one.

Now have they got that message? Do you think they have that one? Have they got it this time? We may have to say it again. Other members will say it, but have they got the message, do you think, that we do not intend to see the passage of this bill until the strike is settled?

Now the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) talks about whether or not the two are related, and he construes that they are not related. Well, let me take him

through it again. We submit they are very closely related for a number of reasons. Here is another reason that we have not advanced yet: We feel that a government that will not treat its employees fairly, we feel that a government that will manipulate law enforcement to serve its political ends cannot be trusted with \$750,000,000 in the first place, which is what they are asking for.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if they will -

MR. TULK:

Did you say billion?

MR. SIMMONS:

Three-quarters of a billion dollars, and this is just Interim Supply. They want the entire budget for Transportation and the entire budget for Public Works under Interim Supply. It is traditional to ask for two or three months supply, they are asking for twelve months supply, in some cases.

Maybe, Mr. Chairman, if we were completely sinister we would see even more of a reason in this bill that relates it to the strike than we thought about. Why are those two departments, Transportation and Public Works, from which the MOS units largely come, which are out on strike right now, singled out for the full twelve month supply as opposed to two or three months? Perhaps the government is looking for a longer haul here if they can only get this House out of the way. Perhaps that is it, Mr. Chairman.

Let me say it again, Mr. Chairman, just in case the gentleman from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) does not fully understand. We think the two are closely

related. Any hon. crowd that would manipulate law enforcement to serve its own political ends cannot be trusted with \$750,000,000 in the first place. They can have that \$750,000,000 from our standpoint if they show some good faith on the labour dispute, good faith resulting in its being settled.

Now, the gentleman from Carbonear (Mr. Peach) says they are showing good faith. The real proof of the pudding, I say to the gentleman from Carbonear, is the settlement of the dispute. The people concerned have not been covert or oblique on what they are asking for, they are asking for something that other employees of government already have, that is to say a certain wage level. They are just asking for parity, the catch-up provision, to allow these people to get the same kind of money that other employees doing the same work are already getting.

Indeed, if the government which today followed through on an initiative by my friend from Mount Scio (Mr. Barry), the initiative to privatize NORDCO, would now take his advice on this strike, we would have a settlement reasonably soon.

MR. TULK:

He would certainly have the House closed.

MR. SIMMONS:

He would have the House closed and he would have the \$750,000,000 they want to rush out and spend.

Mr. Chairman, I do not believe our requirements, our conditions are unreasonable. I understand the government would like to get the bill without those particular conditions, and they have ways, I

suppose, if they get even more undemocratic. But I do not know how you can be more dictatorial, more undemocratic than they were out in front of this building last week in the way they applied that injunction. But if they want to take over the House altogether, and I would not be surprised, nothing with this administration surprises me any more, then that is their funeral, that is their choice. If they want to do it in a dictatorial fashion, it would be very much in character for them to do it that way. I do not see why they would treat the members of the House any more gently than they do the people who work for them normally, when they are not on strike.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):

Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, we will be back at it again. We would now like to hear some responses from the minister.

Would the minister tell me why the full amount in Public Works and about 95 per cent of the amount in Transportation is being asked for at this particular time? That is a fair question.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

I will gladly sit down if the hon. Minister of Finance wants to get up. Surely I would think that a bill of such importance would have an array of speakers from the

other side just forcing their way up. I will be quite glad to yield to some speaker on the other side. I am just doing this out of duty, Mr. Chairman. I did not come here to sit down and watch things slide through without being debated, nor did I come here to monopolize the time of this House when there are other members who might want to say something on the Supply Bill.

Mr. Chairman, Friday past I sat in this Chamber during Question Period and the galleries were filled with men and women who have been forced into going on strike. I looked up at that section up there, just up in that corner, and I saw a placard that one of the strikers had smuggled into the galleries. No doubt he was unaware that it was illegal to bring those placards in. He did not realize what he was doing. In his lack of understanding of what he was supposed to do in the galleries, he brought this placard in and he held it up plainly for all on this side to see. The words on that placard were, "Bill 59, he is not our Brian." When I saw that placard, Mr. Chairman, I was reminded of Blackwood's painting entitled, 1971. In that painting, Mr. Chairman, all the morbid, sinister effects that Blackwood uses his paintings come through quite obviously; right in the foreground there is a picture of Joey and behind Joey there is a group of people. The scene is bleak. It is a dirty snow and icy color, and some people, obviously Newfoundlanders, are stood up with their backs toward Joey.

Mr. Chairman, I will confess that I did not understand what the painting was about until it was explained to me. It was explained to me that in 1971 the people of

this Province turned their backs and walked away from the then Premier, Mr. Smallwood. When I looked at "Bill 59, he is not our Brian," on that poster I said to myself, we have a similarity here but it is only a similarity. In 1971, Mr. Chairman, Newfoundlanders walked away from Joey. In 1986, Mr. Chairman, we have a Premier and a government who turn their backs on Newfoundlanders. It is a little bit similar but the effect is the same.

In 1971 we saw the end of the Smallwood era, in 1986 we are seeing the end of the Peckford era. Now, Mr. Chairman, is that not a tremendous message to send forth to Newfoundlanders today, Newfoundlanders who are out there suffering the sleet and freezing rain? Surely goodness there cannot be a greater curse on strikers than freezing rain; this rain sticks to the glasses of people who have to wear them. What a tremendous message to go forward from this House today, 'You are in the last days of the Peckford administration.' What a tremendous message for the strikers out there to whose glasses the freezing rain is sticking. What a tremendous message, 'we are in the last days.' As a former preacher, Mr. Chairman, 'the last days' has a different connotation. Nevertheless, the message is even greater to Newfoundlanders, to know that the struggle will soon be over, the injustice will soon be wiped away. I get overwhelmed with it, Mr. Chairman, and then I keep going back. We are in the last days of the Peckford administration. Let me give you some indications: One of the biggest indications that we are in the last days of the Peckford

administration is the struggle that is taking place today within the Peckford Cabinet. It has become common knowledge. Hon. gentlemen know of the struggle that is taking place within the Peckford Cabinet today. The President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) gets up and acts completely contrary to the Premier. We get the President of Treasury Board and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Windsor), totally on their own initiative, trying to get some little backroom meeting going with NAPE, trying to make a name for themselves. Because do not forget, Mr. Chairman, there is a very strong rumour around that the President of Treasury Board does have a war chest in place and that he is just waiting to put on the crown of the Premier, he is just waiting to take over that position. If he could only make a name for himself in this dispute what a springboard it would be for him to take the Premier's position. Remember 1971 when John Crosbie had the same little thing going, Mr. Chairman? The same thing was happening in Cabinet in the 1970s when John Crosbie was driving his knife into the back of Premier Smallwood. It is all happening again. It is the downfall of a corrupt administration which sneaked this way by two elections, which built peoples hopes up on the great rewards of the offshore oil, which got Newfoundlanders looking forward to the day when they would have their place in the sun, when their biggest problem would be whether the interest rate was going to go from 12.5 per cent to 13 per cent; all we were going to worry about was our investments.

The farce, the silliness that has taken place in this Province over the last six or seven years, while

this Premier has been in office, is absolutely funny, it is hilarious. If it were not for the anguish and the pain that it brings to Newfoundlanders it would be funny. But, Mr. Chairman, it is not funny. When I looked up in that gallery a few days ago, Mr. Chairman, one of the men I saw up there was the old gentleman whose job in this building is to carry the mail around to the various offices. I do not know the man's age but I would assume he is in his sixties. The old gentleman who takes the internal mail.

MR. BAIRD:

That is the job we have lined up for you after the next election.

MR. DECKER:

You know the gentleman I am talking about. Now that old gentleman is by nobody's interpretation a law breaker. That old gentleman is the last person on earth who would want to go on strike, who would want to defy any order or any law. But, Mr. Chairman, he could only be pushed so far. He could only be tramped over by hobnail boots so many times. He could only take so much, Mr. Chairman. This is the message that is coming through loud and clear to a corrupt Peckford Administration, to a divided Peckford Administration, to a Peckford Administration which is repeating the history of 1971, division within itself, the Chairman of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) trying to get the Premier's job, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Blanchard) trying to get back some credibility because he was one of the ones who agreed to going on and arresting our fellow Newfoundlanders.

Mr. Chairman, just think what would have happened in this

dispute if the General Service had not gone out on strike? I have to hand it to Fraser March, you know, he is very astute. Fraser March realized that had the General Service not gone out, the Transportation Workers would have been beaten. We are nearing the end of the snowfall. Come the last of March, a lot of the Transportation Workers are layed off, the temporary ones anyway. If there happened to be a snow storm early in April, a few were called back. But generally speaking, after the last of March, the Transportation Workers would have been beaten. They would have lost this strike.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

The hon. the member's time is up.

MR. DECKER:

Thank you. I will come back, Mr. Chairman.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Stephenville.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to speak to this bill.

It is a foggy day outside today and I think that is indicative of this administration. I have an article here which I think tells a tale of the situation we have in this Province today. The money that is not coming into Newfoundland is the direct cause of the administration we have here today and the direct cause of the administration we have in Ottawa today.

The Atlantic Insight edition for March of 1986 tells the tale. It is titled, "Losing Clout, Atlantic Canada's Cabinet Ministers in Ottawa." They are not even boxing anymore for Newfoundland, Mr. Chairman. It says, "The loss of clout of John Crosbie, Robert Coates and Elmer MacKay in the federal Cabinet are signs of Atlantic Canada's weakening influence in Ottawa." That is unreal to think that that could possibly happen with all this co-operation and consultation. I am somewhat amazed. I have talked to many people who have said to me, "What is happening up there in Ottawa? We have a former Tory leadership candidate for the federal party in the Cabinet and he does not even have an economic portfolio and we are getting nailed to the wall down here."

A few years ago, with all those bad Liberals up in Ottawa, we were getting done in right silly! You just could not get anything from them! Now they brought deregulation in. There was no such thing as Structure 90, we were told. But now there are articles all over the place and people saying, Structure 90 is in and gone. It is destroying the transportation of Atlantic Canada. What do we have down here, people are saying, with our government? There is nothing going on. They are turning a blind eye and not even going to say a word while we get done in down here.

**MR. BAIRD:**

Did anybody ever tell you you look like Brian Tobin?

**MR. K. AYLWARD:**

I will tell you now, I would rather look like Brian Tobin than look like you.

As far as I am concerned, asking for \$750,000 in Interim Supply in three days is just an example of the management of this Province by this administration. We have lost all our clout in Ottawa. We were supposed to have more clout and we have lost it all. They are not even throwing punches anymore. It is absolute foolishness.

The hon. James McGrath says here the Canadian Transport Commission started to look after regional interests. He now wonders if the Province will be turning back to the era of the bush plane under deregulation. He says, "Who will carry the people from Deer Lake?" Here is a man up there twenty-three years in parliament and he is on the Tory side saying that. We have people down here saying, "nothing is going on." We are getting done in right silly and they are sitting down here doing nothing.

I attended a meeting over at the University the other day. Federal transfer payments are going to be cut. It will not hurt that many people as badly, but it is going to hurt Newfoundland very badly, as a matter of fact. It is ridiculous. What do we have over there? Because of the partisan way they want to get on, if the Liberals were in now, they would be over at the University saying "the federal government is doing Newfoundland in again. They are doing us in again." I went over there the other day, I was sitting back and they were saying "well, boy, you know, there are tough times in Canada now. We have to cut back wherever we can. It is going to hurt Newfoundland but, it is going to hurt the other provinces as well." We have the highest unemployment rate in Canada, the highest unemployment

in North America, and we are down here saying "now, well, we have to go along with Ottawa."

MR. TULK:

Kissing cousins.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Co-operation and consultation! I think that this edition of Atlantic Insight says it all, "Losing Clout." They cannot even negotiate any collective agreements any more. I have some information for the ladies and gentlemen across the way. A federal programme that was brought in in 1977 by the bad Liberal Administration set out monies for Labour Canada. What they did was they provided so much money to educate the labour unions in Canada for negotiating. The Federal Tory Administration, which thinks that everything up there that was set up is bad, has now decided to extend that programme because it has done such a good job. But I want to give them some advice. I am going to ask them to put some money aside for Newfoundland's Labour Department down here so they can help them do a course on how to negotiate a collective agreement, because I think they have had a problem.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

For the minister.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

This article is dated February 17, 1986,. It is only recent and here we have a gigantic dispute going on, out of all proportions. We have people who do not know what is going on over there that are trying to solve a dispute.

Just want to show the ineptness, I

attended an Arts Conference, the first time in months or years that we were trying to solve some of the problems in the Arts. They planned it for a year. The minister decided not to show up. He said he is up in Montreal.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You were there.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I was there, I took good care of it as a matter of fact.

He was up in Montreal all right, he was gone to Grand Bank for a banquet. I have no problem with that but, they have been working all year to set the Province-wide Arts Conference up to discuss the problems of the Arts, which is directly in his purview. He decides not to show up and listen to the views of the Arts community. Maybe I am just a way back in another day but, my philosophy is that you go to the people who have the problems, talk to them about the problems and try to come up with a solution. That is obvious. I think that minister gives an indication of what exactly this administration is like, because he decides he is not going to bother to go, and you tell people you are going to go there and not show up, tells people he is not going to listen to them anyway, to whatever they say. So I think this is exactly what this administration does and practices. As is evident, it is starting to be shown again.

They are only asking for \$325 million and they want it in three days.

MR. EFFORD:

If they want it in three days, they will have to earn it.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I just lost \$20 at the hockey game, and that took two weeks to give away.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It shows lack of judgment.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

It shows lack of judgment. That is about the only lack of judgment this guy will show or on this side we will show because when we take over on the other side, we are not going to be as inept as this administration. We are also not going to sit down while Ottawa does us in like we have never been done in in the last twenty-five to thirty years.

I wish we had seven Rhinoceros Party members up there now because of the administration up in Ottawa. We are suppose to have four Tories, four out of seven, and the three Liberals. If it was not for them, it would be all over. We would not have prayer. I must commend them. They are doing an excellent job for the interest of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

They see the problems coming from Ottawa and they are going to directly affect this Budget down here. Taxes are going to have to go up again because Ottawa is deciding that we are going to be pushed further out into the Atlantic Ocean.

MR. TULK:

Have you seen the Nielsen Report?

MR. K. AYLWARD:

I have seen the Nielsen Report. If the Tories had their way up

there in Ottawa, Newfoundland is going to be over by England very shortly because I think they want to push us as far away as they can get us.

MR. TULK:

No, boy, they would sink us.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

They would do more than sink us. Yes, increase the rates on the ferries to get over here, increase the taxes down here, get rid of the railway, put us in bush planes and get over from the West Coast, that is real good Tory philosophy for Newfoundland, I will tell you. It is really going to help the West Coast of Newfoundland and Labrador and Central Newfoundland. I will tell you, if that is Tory philosophy this gentleman will never ever, ever quit until they are gone from Ottawa and Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Co-operation and consultation. I just cannot believe it. I see money here for labour. Labour is getting \$1,509,600. I hope that this new re-training programme is there in that because somebody is going to have to do something over there to get this dispute settled and all other disputes that are going on settled.

MR. TULK:

They are going to use that to hire negotiators.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

The new buzz word today is exploratory talks. I know we have had some good finds of gold on the South Coast and a few other places here on the Island but, it took a few years to find that. If we are



going to keep up exploratory talks, I figure that this labour dispute will go on and on until no end can be found. I would like to advise -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):

Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman, I was making a few remarks there which I did not get a chance to finish. I wish there was some way we could have this time limit extended, Mr. Chairman, so that we could speak for four or five hours at one time without having to stop because it disrupts you. I forget what I was saying. I forget where I was. I do know what I was saying, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BAIRD:

And everybody else forgot what you said too.

MR. DECKER:

I do know, Mr. Chairman, I was saying that we are in the last days of the Peckford Administration. I think it would be appropriate to refer to the early days of the Peckford Administration, Mr. Chairman.

The thing that stands out from me about the early days of the Peckford Administration was when

you turned on your television set, even if you were up in the Strait of Belle Isle, up in Roddickton, you turn on CBC television and there would be large crowds of people, Mr. Chairman, and the Premier would be literally wading in amongst the crowds of people, wading in amongst them, Mr. Chairman, and what a site it was. Here was this young man, no baggage, no hangers on, he became Premier without having to pay any debts, to pay off any political favours, Mr. Chairman, squeaky clean, wading into the crowds of Newfoundlanders, wading in among them, shaking hands with them, padding them on the back and laughing. It was a pretty picture. This was the early days. He was handing out to them hope, telling them that if we can fight Ottawa - one of the things he suggested, Mr. Chairman, is we might even become an independent nation again, proud and free!

He even went and got a flag, Mr. Chairman, in preparation for the day when we cut off the umbilical cord from Ottawa and we became a proud independent nation once again. I think he had it right down pat, Mr. Chairman, about how the Responsible Government worked and how we were a Dominion of Newfoundland. I heard the Premier refer to it as the Dominion of Newfoundland. The thing that he always took pride in in the early days of the Peckford Administration was his ability to meet with Newfoundlanders face to face. If there were, Mr. Chairman, some sort of a dispute, the hon. Premier did not mind a dispute. He simply walked down amongst this crowd of Newfoundlanders, talked it over with them and, in a matter of minutes, everything was solved. If it were an official opening,

the Premier had no fear of his fellow Newfoundlanders. He just walked in among them and took part in the celebration or whatever the case might be. These were the early days, Mr. Chairman, that was the beginning of the Peckford administration. That was before the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Windsor) wanted to become Premier.

MR. TULK:

He wants what?

MR. DECKER:

He wants to become Premier. You have not heard of the war chest. You must be the only person in Newfoundland who has not heard about the war chest. That was before the Minister of Career Development (Mr. Power) really wanted to see the Premier move aside, that was before that. That was before the member for Grand Falls, the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Simms) who I miss today, wanted to be Premier. I honestly wish he were here because he definitely does something for my guile when he is here, when I look across and see him. His perm is growing out now but still he does bring something to this hon. House.

All this wading in among the crowds of Newfoundlanders, Mr. Chairman, took place in the early days of the Peckford administration. It took place before the corruption set in. It took place before the rot set in, Mr. Chairman.

Let us move ahead in time, let us come away now, let us move forward now, Mr. Chairman, from the early days of the Peckford administration when the young, vibrant, squeaky clean gentleman waded in among us

Newfoundlanders.

Let me show you another sight in March of 1986 and I will show you a sea of Newfoundlanders, upwards to 5,000 who paraded on the front steps of the Confederation Building. Mr. Chairman, this is not the opening days of the Peckford administration, I am talking about the closing days, the dying days. The former PC voters as the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) pointed out to me so eloquently. They did indeed vote PC, Mr. Chairman, and had they not voted PC, Mr. Chairman, we would have had a Liberal government in this Province. I hasten to say they are former PC voters, Mr. Chairman. Here is this sea of Newfoundlanders, now mind you, they are not out to an official opening of the Confederation Building. That is not why they are there. They are not there to praise the Premier because he has fine taste in art. That is not why they are there. They are not there to praise the Premier because he has written a tremendous piece of literature which will go down in history for generations yet unborn to read. They are not there to inaugurate the publication of the hon. Premier's book.

No, Mr. Chairman, they are there because they believe from the bottom of their hearts that they are being underpaid, that they are being discriminated against and I agree with them, they are. They believe strongly enough in this, Mr. Chairman, that they are prepared to put their jobs on the line. Do we see the hon. Premier wading in amongst those Newfoundlanders and shaking hands with them? 'How are you boy?' It is funny, Mr. Chairman, wading in among them, whacking them on the

back, 'How are the rabbits going? Catch any rabbits those days? What are the moose like? Did you get a license this year?,' the man of the people, the old Brian. How does he get into the building, Mr. Chairman? He has to go and get a police escort. The same fellow who before the corruption set in, who before his government began to fall apart, could walk in among any crowd and slap them on the back and ask how the moose hunting was coming or how the rabbit catching was going. Now, Mr. Chairman, he cannot get into the building to his place of work unless he has got two of the biggest, ugliest, brawniest police officers in this Province to escort him across the picket lines.

Mr. Chairman, I could recommend to the hon. Premier that he should begin making reservations in Hawaii somewhere to have a place to go and live after he is kicked out of office because it is extremely difficult for former dictators, Mr. Chairman, to get a place to live. Marcos, I understand, is in Hawaii because nobody else will take him. The guy who thrown out of Haiti the other day, France does not want him. They are trying to boot him out but no one will take him. It is a very hazardous designation to be referred to as a former dictator. So, my advice to the hon. Premier, Mr. Chairman, is to begin to buy a few properties around the world because, when he is defeated and defeated, Mr. Chairman, he is going to be, just as sure as the sun is going to rise tomorrow, just as sure as the tide is going to come in once again, just as sure as the moon waxes and wanes, just as sure as day comes and night follows day and day follows night, just as

sure as that, Mr. Chairman, the hon. the Premier is on his last few days because we can see it around us. He is not wading into the sea of Newfoundlanders.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder how good my memory of Greek is. I remember, Mr. Chairman, about King Oedipus Rex in Greek mythology. I am sure the hon. Chairman remembers Oedipus Rex in some of his readings.

MR. GILBERT:

That is not Sesame Street. He would not know.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman, Oedipus was indeed a great king. At the end of that Greek tragedy, Mr. Chairman, the poem goes something like this: You will correct me I am sure if I am wrong. 'Sons and Daughters of Thebes/Behold this was Oedipus, greatest of men/He was envied by all his fellow men for his great prosperity/Then lo, what a full tide of misfortune swept over his head/And learned that mortal man must always look to his ending/And none can be called great until that day when he carries his greatness down to the grave in peace.' Mr. Chairman, that is an excerpt from Oedipus Rex, the Greek tragedy. What we are witnessing in this Province today is the demise of Oedipus Brian.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, I hope -

MR. DECKER:

I shall return.

DR. COLLINS:

Good, I was hoping the hon. member would return because we like the unfolding of this fairy tale and this Newfoundland myth that we have been hearing.

I will just make two comments, Mr. Chairman. Firstly, the hon. gentleman is incorrect when he says that there is something new about the Premier having a police escort. There was a labour disturbance in this Province when this administration first took office and, like in so many situations where there is a public tumult, or a public commotion, there is often the odd kook out there. Now, he may not have anything to do with the people involved in the difficulty. He can be quite separate from government, quite separate from -

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman, is the hon. minister calling Newfoundlanders kooks? Has he stooped so low that he would call Newfoundlanders kooks?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, as I say, in any population where there is tumult and upset, there often is a kook out there and it has often got nothing to do with the people involved in the controversy. It is often someone quite separate. That person can often make a threat on some public figure. We had kooks in the United States who

shot a President there. We had kooks in the United States who wounded a President. We had kooks in Italy. I do not know what their nationality was but they shot a Pope. We had a kook in Sweden who shot a Prime Minister. So kooks happen! We may have kooks on the other side of this House for all I know. But anyway, at that time, at the beginning of this administration taking office, there was a kook or a number of kooks who threatened the Premier's life. The Premier quite correctly, and it would have been totally irresponsible for him not to take such a threat seriously, got some police protection.

During this present thing the same thing happened again and I am sure it will happen in our history and in other public figures' history down through the ages. For the hon. member to say that this is something new just means that he has no concept of history. I am surprised at the hon. member. I thought that the member had a really good insight into historic processes but he does not. He can see only as far as his nose can reach. What is happening at the present time is as far as his vision will reach. Mr. Chairman, that is that point.

The only other point I want to make is this. There are 5,000 people, I think, involved in the labour dispute at the present time. That means there are 25,000 people who take their income from the public service who are not involved in the public dispute. Those 25,000 are working on behalf of the people of this Province. By and large - I do not suppose we can say the 100 per cent, you cannot say 100 per cent about anything - they are doing a good and honest day's work and they are

worthy of their hire and they are worthy of being paid. How do these 25,000 honest people, get paid? They get paid when this House gives authority to government to expend monies and they do not get paid if this House does not give government the authority to pay money.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS:

Now that authority we have at the present time is going to run out in a few days. If the hon. members opposite do not pass this bill, they are saying to those 25,000 workers 'we do not want you to get paid for your work.' That is what the hon. members opposite will be saying. That message will be out there. 'We do not want you to get paid. We do not care if you have been working on behalf of the people of Newfoundland, if you have been leaving your homes coming in here, putting in a decent day's work and doing all the things that are required of you, we do not care about that. Just for our political image and our political purposes, we do not give a, whatever, and you are not going to get paid as far as we are concerned. To the extent that we can stop it, we will ensure that you do not get paid.'

Mr. Chairman, we appeal therefore to members opposite not to be so heartless and cruel and self-centered. Let the members opposite allow us to have the authority to pay these honest workers out there, workers who are probably, to some extent, in their own districts. I know there are some in my district and they deserve to be paid because if they are not paid, obviously, their families will suffer. I appeal to

members opposite. Do not let the families of these people suffer from the point of view that you are attempting to bring that about.

Mr. Chairman, I can tell you this government, no matter what happens, will not let your dastardly plan, if that is your dastardly plan, come about. We will make sure that people understand the nature of the dastardly plan. We will make sure that the people who are working and deserve to be paid, if there is any risk that they may not be paid, that they know where that risk comes from. But we will also assure them that we will not let that risk come to fruition and they will indeed get paid.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:  
Mr. Chairman, we did not see the Minister of Finance standing up in this House and calling the members on the picket lines kooks while they were here in the galleries. That is not a very brave thing to do when the galleries are empty and the press are absent to start calling these hard working men and women who are looking for a decent wage kooks because they are out on the picket lines.

DR. COLLINS:  
A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):  
A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:  
I hesitate to rise because I really do not have a point of

order I suppose but I just want to point out that the Leader of the Opposition is now making his own spurious case. I did not at any point in time say that the members in the gallery, I did not say that any particular person was a kook.

MR. TULK:

You should have said a point of privilege not a point of order.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, you cannot bring up points of privilege in Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

There is a point of order on the floor.

DR. COLLINS:

You cannot bring up points of privilege in Committee. There is no such thing as points of privilege in Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

There is a point of order on the floor.

DR. COLLINS:

The hon. member who is making that statement, the Leader of the Opposition, knows it is wrong and he is only making a spurious argument.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, a point of privilege can always be raised.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):

The Chairman of the Committees cannot hear a point of privilege. I can rise the Committee.

MR. SIMMONS:

That is blatant nonsense, Mr. Chairman. Of course you can hear points of privilege in Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

No, I have to rise the Committee.

MR. SIMMONS:

Well, you might have to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order. By the minister's own admission, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Chairman, I would like to respond to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) in this way. I hope the minister is listening. We, Mr. Chairman, have said, no settlement, no interim supply. That is our position. A settlement or a very, very clear evidence that there is a reasonable attempt by government to settle. If there is a reasonable offer, a reasonable attempt that is rejected by the other side, then we are not going to hold up the business of the House. We are not going to blame that on government. But unless we see a move towards settlement of this dispute, no Supply Bill will pass this House as long as we can talk it out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:

Mr. Chairman, there are certain options open.

MR. REID:

You are taking backwater now.

MR. BARRY:

No, I am not taking backwater now. I would like the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) to hear this too so that there is no misunderstanding. We will not be

passing Interim Supply at six o'clock today if there is no settlement of this dispute.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:

Point number two: The Government House Leader has the option, if he so wishes, to have us sit tonight. If that is done, Mr. Chairman, we will sit tonight. We will sit through the night and we will sit up to the Budget Speech tomorrow and we will not, Mr. Chairman, as far as we can do so, permit Interim Supply to pass before the Budget Speech tomorrow while there is not a settlement of this dispute.

I do not want to have the Government House Leader, the Minister of Finance or anybody else misinterpreting what we are saying. In the past, Mr. Chairman

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. BARRY:

Are you going to control the Committee, Mr. Chairman?

It has been the practice from time to time for the Opposition to keep government on tender hooks as to whether or not Interim Supply would pass and the threat of having cheques held up has often been effective in having the Supply passed. I am telling the House Leader this is not one of those situations. We are serious in what we are saying so that the Government House Leader can make his plans. We do not intend to permit Interim Supply to pass this afternoon or as long as we can speak on Interim Supply. Using whatever rules of the House are

within our capability to do so, we will fight Interim Supply until we see settlement of this labour dispute forthcoming.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, I just have a few words to respond to the hon. gentleman. They might be serious, Mr. Chairman, but they are also very irresponsible. The hon. gentlemen there opposite wish to take this pattern. We have attempted to run this House, despite what the hon. gentlemen like to say about us, in an orderly fashion. We have done this particularly in the days of the Peckford Administration. We have had every session divided into two whereby, in an orderly fashion, we try to deal with the budgetary matters, Supply, the Address in Reply, and overall government policy. That is in the Spring. Then in the Fall, we have had another which has been a legislative session. We have seen all of those efforts, in which we have tried to bring about an orderly session, thwarted. Last year I think we were treated to some four weeks over fifteen sitting days where the hon. gentlemen there opposite debated Supplementary Supply. It is a fact that in most jurisdictions, and particularly in the federal jurisdiction where they pass monetary bills of up to \$130 billions, that they pass after some eight or nine days of debate.

We are dealing here with Interim Supply. It is not like we are dealing with the Budget, and we are asking the hon. gentlemen to pass the Budget within a day or so. We gave the hon. gentlemen adequate notice of this on March 10. Tomorrow the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) will bring in his Budget. That Budget will contain the entire package of the government, its intention with respect to spending, its estimations with respect to revenues and the means of raising revenues for the ensuing year. So it is not as if we are asking the hon. gentlemen to give us a blank cheque. We have asked the hon. gentlemen to pass Supply, realizing the period of time that we are in, realizing that we are near the end of March when the ordinary legislative powers expire, and realizing that we are in the Easter season where, if Interim Supply is not passed today, it is going to be impossible then for Interim Supply to be passed before the end of this month with the consequential problems that will entail in effecting payment of cheques to salary workers, hospital workers, and people in receipt of social assistance.

What is the hon. gentlemen's response? I say it is a lack of perspective that the Opposition has shown under the leadership of the hon. gentleman. He wants to couple together the settlement of the strike with the passage of Supply. I know he cannot see two things at once and he sees everything altogether. This is a real example of the instability of the hon. gentleman in the way in which he is dealing with the government of this Province.

We are in the Legislative Assembly

of a democratic government. We have been trying to run it in an orderly fashion and this is the type of way that the hon. gentleman is dealing with it. He wants to deal with the strike and deal with Supply. So he wants to put the people who are recipients of social assistance in jeopardy, pending the resolution of the strike. It may well be with all the good efforts of the government and with all the good intentions of everybody that everybody might certainly like to see all things passed at once, but they may not be possible. Is it right? Is it responsible? The hon. gentlemen may be serious as they say, I have no doubt they are, but is it responsible for the hon. gentlemen to take the position that they are taking with respect to this Interim Supply Bill?

Let us understand what we are talking about now. We are not asking the hon. gentlemen to give us a blank cheque for millions of dollars. What we did on March 10 was we gave the hon. gentlemen adequate notice of the fact that when the House reconvened that we would bring in Interim Supply when we did, on Thursday March 20. We also wrote the hon. gentlemen and said "as you are aware March 25, falls on the Tuesday before Easter. Because of Easter Week, the House will thus have no opportunity to sit beyond the delivery of the Budget on March 31." I think that is reasonable enough. "Additionally, it is intended, as is customary, to adjourn the House after the Budget Speech until April 7 for the usual Easter Holidays."

Having given the hon. gentlemen notice of that, having provided three days for Interim Supply debate, having provided for the



budget of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the government to come in tomorrow so the full spending plans of the government are before the people, is there really any justification for the Opposition to turn around and take this position? They are playing little games and some of them are serious, like the member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) and the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert) but the usual ones have little jackass smiles on their face as if they are playing little games in a high school in Grade XI or Grade XII when talking to the teachers.

The fact of the matter is they have been elected, Mr. Speaker, in the same way that members on this side of the House have been elected, with responsibility to provide for the timely payment of hospital supplies and the working of hospitals, with the responsibility for the payment of the salaries of hospital workers, with the responsibility for the timely payment of social assistance recipients and what have you.

Let it be understood, Mr. Speaker, that what we have tried to do here, as I say, is to provide a democratic framework for the operation of the House. We have given the hon. gentlemen a time table with respect to it and they have, once again, rejected it. They are playing games. They can play games all they want to but who they are playing games with are the nurses in this Province who may be waiting for cheques; the social assistance recipients who may be waiting for cheques; the pensioners who may be waiting for their salary cheques as a result of the irresponsibility, the puerility and the immaturity

of the hon. gentlemen.

The hon. gentleman in his vested hatred of the Peckford Administration and his government should not get up and try to couple his own personal ambitions in with this very, very important measure that we have before the House.

I will just conclude by saying, Mr. Chairman, that we have attempted once again to be reasonable. We have given them the framework. We have told them that the budget will come in. We have brought Interim Supply forth. If this Interim Supply is not passed, and if, as a result of this, the people cannot get paid their salaries, well the blame can be on the hon. gentlemen. If the hon. gentlemen further thinks -

MR. DECKER:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

A point of order, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman, when the hon. gentleman was going through his litany of people who would not get their cheques - I am going to assist the hon. gentleman if he will allow me - I understand that some members in the top echelons of the civil service also got a 6 per cent increase and they are going to get this in a lump sum after this thing is passed. He failed to mention this 6 per cent, which I understand is a considerable amount of money too, Mr. Chairman. The hon. gentleman should not leave those people out.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, listen to the hon.

the living apocalypse. The hon. gentleman got up in this House a few moments ago and the only thing the hon. gentleman had to contribute to this debate was try to incite things as he always does when he gets up. He thought his speech to the House was amusing but it was not particularly amusing.

Mr. Speaker, we were also asked why do we not sit during the nighttime? Yes, why do we not sit during the nighttime and into tomorrow and the Budget Speech, and into Wednesday and into Thursday and into Good Friday and into Easter Sunday? The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that we have ordered the affairs of this House in a way that we have avoided at all times night sittings. Generally, despite the hon. gentlemen there opposite, it has been for the benefit of the operations of this House. This government, number one, has no intention of sitting nights. This government has given due notice to the Opposition of what its legislative programme was. This government has given quite adequate time for the Opposition to pass Interim Supply.

The hon. gentlemen want to play games with the lives of social assistance recipients and pensioners and want to try to link it to the resolution of the strike and what have you. One does not follow the other. It shows how they got things out of all proportion. We are not going to bend to it, Mr. Speaker. We are the government and we would just ask the hon. gentlemen to act responsibly and pass it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):  
Order, please!

I would like to remind the hon. gentleman his time is up.

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Chairman, after listening to a speech like that I would have cried but I left my tissues at home.

MR. SIMMS:  
When you cry tears do not fall anyway.

MR. EFFORD:  
Tears do not fall, then I would not need a tissue. But to sit here and listen to the minister over there standing up for five or ten minutes and go on with a lot of blarney like he just went on with is unbelievable. To try and threaten the people of this Province and try and threaten the Opposition Party that they must -

MR. TULK:  
Frighten us to death.

MR. EFFORD:  
Frighten us to death that we must do as they say or else. I mean a tactic to be used by such an educated man, it is time to leave, it is time to get out of this situation because the day that we are going to sit down here and have the minister opposite stand up and inform us, 'Now you do exactly as I say or we will tell the people of the Province or

else, everything is going to be over.' Come on, gentlemen, we have to realize that this democratic system works a little bit better than that. We do have the freedom to think.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:  
We do have the freedom to speak. As much as you try not to allow it, as much as through the dictatorship of your leader -

DR. COLLINS:  
Why do you not use your freedom?

MR. EFFORD:  
I do once in a while. When I am confronted with looking at you people all day long, it takes a lot away from it.

MR. PEACH:  
Tell us about your arena now. Tell us about all the money government put into it.

MR. EFFORD:  
To the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach), I was quite happy that the federal Liberals put in \$182,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:  
And I was quite happy that every man, woman and child in the Conception Bay - Port de Grave district walked and raised money. I was quite happy about that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Chairman, could we have the

backseats quieted?

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
Order, please!

MR. EFFORD:  
There is a wonder why Randy Collins is not back in the House of Assembly.

MR. PEACH:  
This is your last term.

MR. EFFORD:  
The member from Carbonear knows different than that. He saw evidence of that Saturday night. The member for Carbonear knows different than that.

Mr. Chairman, getting back to the business at hand.

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:  
Yes, boy, stop wasting time.

MR. EFFORD:  
You should speak to your goats behind you, put a yoke on them.

Mr. Chairman -

MR. TOBIN:  
There are people in your district had to come in and get me to help them. They could get no satisfaction from you and you know that is true.

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
Order, please!

The hon. member has the right to be heard in silence.

MR. EFFORD:  
Mr. Chairman, threats by the government in power are not going to do anything to keep the Opposition over here from doing

their job. We have a job to do. We were elected by a number of people in this Province.

MR. J. CARTER:

By the scum of the earth.

MR. EFFORD:

What did the hon. member for St. John's North say?

MR. J. CARTER:

You were elected by the scum of your district.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. CALLAN:

That will bear repeating John.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Chairman, I have to rise on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. DECKER:

This House is sinking. Some days ago one of the members referred to Newfoundlanders as being lazy. Now the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) is calling Newfoundlanders scum. The majority of that district put that hon. member here. I think it is only right and proper that the member for St. John's North withdraw that remark. It is not fitting for this House to refer to Newfoundlanders, regardless what their political strife happens to be, whether it is Tory or NDP or Liberal or even Communist, Mr. Chairman, there is no excuse for calling Newfoundlanders scum and I would challenge the hon. member to withdraw that remark.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):

To that point of order, I would have to check the Hansard for exactly what was said.

The hon. the member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I can assure the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) that everybody out in my district will be told the exact words that he used in this House of Assembly. It shows what a low life person you are. If the member for Carbonear (Mr. Peach) and member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) laughed at that and went along with those words, they will also be told of exactly the words that he used that they condoned.

Mr. Chairman, a lot of these problems would not be going on in this Province today if -

MR. W. CARTER:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

A point of order, the hon. the member for Twillingate.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Chairman, with due respect, Sir, I do not think you need to wait to check Hansard. I think there are thirty members here who clearly heard the hon. member say that the scum elected my friend and colleague for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford). What he is saying is that the vast majority of the people in that district are scum and I do not think that statement can be allowed to go unchallenged. I do not think you need wait until Hansard is printed, the fact of the matter is we all heard him say it and he

should be made withdraw it immediately.

MR. TULK:

To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

The member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Carter) is obviously right, and I would ask Your Honour to keep in mind, as well, that I clearly heard him myself. 'You were elected by the scum of your district,' I clearly heard the hon. gentleman say that, Mr. Chairman, and remember that this is the same person, the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter), who looked across this House and called the then member for the Strait of Belle Isle a traitor. Mr. Chairman, if this kind of thing is allowed to go on, if that hon. gentleman is allowed to persist, then we will find the House degraded to the state it should not be. I would ask the Chair to ask him to be a man, if that is possible, and stand up and withdraw the remark, or have the guts to go outside the House and say it.

MR CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order the Chair has already ruled that I did not hear it. I will check Hansard and make a ruling on it tomorrow.

The hon. member for Port de Grave.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Chairman, getting back to the statement I was making about the strike, if government had had any feeling for the people of this Province, and had it used some forethought in its decision-making, we would not be

in the situation we are in today, with 5,000 people out on strike. When the government in power starts to lose feeling for the people, as evidenced in every decision they make, it is the reason we are in this situation. I repeat again, this opposition party over here is not going to be threatened into going along with what they say just to satisfy their greedy needs, their selfish needs, in that they may want to take a quick trip down to Florida or California. We are not going to be threatened into making a decision that we do not agree with and we will stand by our rights as citizens of this Province to fight for the citizens of this Province who need to be fought for.

Getting back to feeling for the people of this Province, I have to make a couple of comments: Reading down through the Interim Supply Bill, Consumer Affairs and Communications is asking for \$592,800 to be spent over the next three months. I have to question why the minister wants to spend this money, because in the last two or three months I have continually risen to my feet in this House of Assembly to try to make the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Russell) aware of exactly what is happening to the people in this Province, how the low income people, the pensioners, the social welfare recipients are devastated by trying to decide whether to heat their homes or feed their families out of the amount of money they receive. I have continuously gotten nonsense, words fooled around with, figures tossed around on paper and, 'Efford, you do not know what you are talking about' thrown back at me.

MR. SIMMS:

Who said that? That is shocking!

MR. EFFORD:

It is shocking. It does not matter whether Efford knows what he is talking about or not, the fact remains that there are pensioners in this Province, low-income persons, widows who each month receive a heating bill, whether it be home heating oil or whether it be electricity, and they have to pay that bill at the end of the month. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Consumer Affairs to protect those people not protect the corporations.

They went as far as to appoint a man to the Public Utilities Board, and pay him a salary of \$25,000 a year, and led us to think and believe that then, at least, we may have some protection for the consumers. But what does he do for that \$25,000? He will use up all of his time and energy trying to contradict what the member for Port de Grave is saying about some figures. And while all of this is going on, we the low-income people are still in the same position. And whether the figures were exactly right or not, the fact of the matter is that the price of oil has gone down on the world oil market and the people of this Province are still paying top rate prices for their home heating oil and for electricity rates. If the price of oil goes down, the cost of heating oil and electricity rates should go down accordingly. Year after year the price of oil went up regardless of how much they had stowed away in their storage tanks, and nobody can stand in this House and deny it, and when it went up, it was only hours or so later that the increase was passed on to the consumer.

MR. J. CARTER:

That is not true.

MR. EFFORD:

You are a nice gentleman to be saying something is not true after what just came out of your mouth.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird)

I would like to inform the hon. gentleman that his time is up.

The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. FUREY:

Do you want some more time?

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Chairman, I should have leave after the way they used up my time with interruptions.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

We have a problem in this House.

MR. EFFORD:

I asked for leave, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is leave granted?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No leave.

MR. J. CARTER:

You will get nothing.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Leave is not granted.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

I would just like to comment on a problem we have in this Committee and the problems in the House, and the problem was, I think, underlined by the last member who spoke. The problem is that this government has great difficulty in

bringing in its programmes -

MR. WINDSOR:

(Inaudible) Larry, Curly and Moe.

DR. COLLINS:

Would the hon. minister let me make my point here?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

I would ask the member for Fogo and the member for Grand Falls to restrain themselves, please.

DR. COLLINS:

The problem is this, that this government has great difficulty in bringing in its programmes and carrying out its functions from the finance point of view. For a government, including this government, to operate, it needs to have authority to do certain things of a financial nature, whether they be a budget, whether they be an Interim Supply Bill, whether they be guarantee bills, whether they be tax measures, all these sorts of things. Now, our problem is this, that we have a tradition in this House and in this Legislature whereby when a money bill comes up our rules allow wide-ranging debate. The reason for that was to make sure that members had opportunities of bringing up important points; they were not just limited, shall we say, to the Throne Speech. If they felt there was a really important point to bring up, one of major public importance, they could bring it up on a money bill. Now, it was never intended to be brought in as a sort of filibuster thing, as a sort of an arrangement where you prevented things from acting.

Now, Mr. Chairman, for the last number of years I have tried to

bring into this House loan and guarantee acts. Now, these loan and guarantee acts have to be brought in because we reach agreements and arrangements with certain financial institutions whereby they will accept our guarantee subject to ratification in this House. Now they do not say you must ratify tomorrow. We will give you a period of time to ratify this agreement. Now, Mr. Chairman, they enter into this agreement in good faith. They take the word of government that we will make efforts to get the Legislature to ratify this agreement, because this agreement is subject to ratification, it is an interim agreement. Mr. Chairman, time and time again those bills and those resolutions have come before this Committee and this House and they have been stopped -

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird):

Order, please! A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman is on his feet over there pretending that the Opposition are the people who are holding up Interim Supply and somehow stopping the people of this Province from getting paid. I ask the hon. gentleman where he was from February 21 to March 18 of this year? When they opened this House on February 6 to try and pass the Atlantic Accord, they got nowhere with it. Now, February 21, because of the heat they were getting, they shut her down again and it was down until March 18. Where were you then? Why were you not here doing your job?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please! Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, let me get back to the point. We bring in money bills in this House that have to be brought in for government to operate, for services to be given to the public, for our programmes to get out and they are stopped time and time and time again because hon. members opposite play little political games and they will not allow the debate to be brought to a vote.

MR. TULK:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

A point of order, the hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:

Let me say to the hon. gentleman that he cannot - and I think it is out of ignorance - mislead this House. The truth of the matter is that if he had been in this House where he was supposed to be, from February 21 to March 18, the seventy-two hours given for supply would have run out a long time ago and he would have had supply. Lack of management on the part of the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is the real problem in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order, there is no point of order, it is a difference of opinion between two

hon. members.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, this Interim Supply Bill is one example of what is happening, and I am glad to say that the press have taken notes of my remarks. This Interim Supply Bill is one example of what has happened but there are innumerable other examples. All you have to do is look at the Order Papers that have been circulated in this House and you will find that money bill after money bill after money bill has been carried forward from Order Paper to Order Paper to Order Paper, from Session to Session to Session mainly because, and totally because, hon. members opposite, as soon as a money bill comes up, will not allow it to go through; they filibuster, they talk on and on until it cannot be brought to a vote. Now, this means that the people of this Province are suffering because these things cannot be brought through. These things have to be brought through. Interim Supply has to be obtained. Hon. members opposite are now playing games, they are using the rules of this House which allow them, unfortunately in my view - we will have to look at changing them - to prevent the proper financial management to be conducted in this Province totally for narrow, short-sighted, self-serving political purposes. As I say, Mr. Chairman, it is not only this bill. I can name the Loan and Guarantee Act -

MR. FUREY:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!



A point of order, the hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. FUREY:

How can the minister of Finance say that he is managing the finances of this Province properly, and stand there and say that people are suffering, when he is responsible for the \$5 million that blew out the window, according to the Auditor General?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. FUREY:

My point of order is, Mr. Chairman

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

To continue, I think the message has to get out that hon. members have to change the way they are acting in this House, preventing proper measures from being brought in, measures that any government, any administration must be able to bring in and get through in a timely fashion. They must either change their behavior or, indeed, we on this side will have to prevail upon the House Leader to bring in changes to the rules.

Now I would not like to see that, because I think the reason why money bills were left in that way was to make sure that if there was an issue that needed to be discussed there would be many

opportunities to do it. But if that privilege is, shall we say, brought into question, if the privilege is not allowed to operate as it should, if that privilege is just used for narrow, partisan purposes to the harm of the people of this Province, I do not think this House can stand by and let it happen. We have to contemplate changing the rules so that money bills, perhaps, can be debated for a number of days and then they have to be brought to a vote, something of that order. Because the way this Interim Supply Bill is being handled by members opposite is disgraceful. The way they handled the Loan Guarantee Resolution was disgraceful, and the way they handled the Local Guarantee Act was disgraceful. Even in the budget, the main estimates debates, if we did not bring in very, very strict time limits it would go on forever and ever. I do not have to remind the Committee that in the House of Commons recently they brought in a budget of \$109 billion and passed it in six days - \$109 billion in six days - and here we have an Interim Supply bill of \$750,000,000 only and they are going to hold it up, not only hold it up, they are going to hold it up despite -

AN HON. MEMBER:

I have my rights.

DR. COLLINS:

The hon. member opposite said, "I have my rights." "I will make sure that someone is in danger of losing their salary," that is the right he wants to have.

He says, "I will not do what is required of me, I am going to stand on my rights of not doing what I should." And who suffers?

Does he suffer? Do we suffer on this side? No. The person who suffers is the person whose salary is put at risk? Now, what sort of a right is that? That is the same sort of right as to say, 'I do not care about the rules of the road, I am going to drive on any side of the road I want.' You know, that is the sort of foolish right that people who take that attitude demand.

So I just want to make this point. I think there are some new members opposite who probably do not realize quite what has been going on and that is that the financial affairs of this Province are, in many cases, being stopped, they are being interfered with in a way that should not happen. They are being stopped by this continual inability of government to get its bills through because of the debate that goes on and on and on. If you summarize it all and add it up, you would probably get two or three sensible paragraphs out of it, but there are pages and pages and pages of Hansard that are totally meaningless. What is the result of it all? The money bills do not get through. I think the people of this Province are not served well by the attitude of members opposite and they should, I implore them, change their attitude or we will just have to, for our own self-protection and the protection of the people of this Province, change the rules.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):

The hon. the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Chairman, we have just heard the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) give us a discourse on democracy; if we do not do it his way they are going to change the rules. It would seem to me that we have gone back some ways, back to Runnymede, where the barons forced King John to sign the Magna Carta. This is where our system started, but now you are telling us that if we do not play your rules you are going to take your marbles and go home, a case of might is right. To me, this would seem to be a serious blow against democracy, but maybe that is the way those people think over there.

Anyhow, I would like to point out that one of the things that has happened here is we have the Interim Supply Bill, which was forced on us three days ago, and we are told to pass it or we are going to be putting people in jeopardy. Well, people are in jeopardy. Those people who are down there on that picket line are in jeopardy right now. We have tried to ask the hon. the Premier and members opposite to answer some questions, and to try and get those people back to work. They have not done it that way so we are trying to highlight a serious situation.

The other thing that I would like to point out is the fact that today we are debating Interim Supply. Tomorrow you say you are bringing down the Budget, Wednesday is Private Members' Day, so you can have Thursday to debate Interim Supply and you can have Monday to debate Interim Supply.

MR. TULK:

They can have Saturday and Sunday, if they want them.

MR. GILBERT:

And Saturday and Sunday. But out of common decency we would expect to close down on Good Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and be open again on Monday.

The last time I spoke in this House, on Friday morning, I asked the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Simms) a few questions. He did not respond right away, but when I left the House, he stood up and made a personal attack on me. I would like to clarify a few points between myself and the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands so we can get it out of the way. At one time, the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands was working with me as an employee. I do not know if he holds that against me.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, like the rest of your employees.

MR. GILBERT:

He was there as a salesman, but he did not do a very good job of it. He tells people he was there to be my campaign chairman - I was running for Governor of Kinsmen. I might add that he was not very good at that, because I lost that campaign.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

When I stood for election to the Council of Grand Falls, or as the member for Bay d'Espoir, I was successful without his help. I do not know if I laid the member off or if he quit. It really does not matter, because he was not much good anyhow. Anyway, we will let the facts speak for themselves.

Now, when he stood up in the House the other day he made a statement

and he talked about the fact that an article appeared in a paper down the bay. I do not know what article appeared, but I know the paper published an apology the next day in the same equal space.

MR. SIMMS:

I did not say that.

MR. GILBERT:

Oh yes you did. Then he mentioned that he was going to circulate the fact in Grand Falls that I was wearing a parity button. I have no problem in wearing a parity button. My mechanics in Grand Falls are making \$13 an hour whereas those in the Department of Transportation are making \$9. They succeeded in negotiating a contract. I have no problem in sitting down and negotiating a contract with unions. This is not a problem, none whatsoever! You talk about the town of Grand Falls. They have a way now of negotiating agreements that they did not have before I went on council. He mentioned the town of Grand Falls. I changed the system out there so that employees in the town of Grand Falls now have a paid negotiator, a person who negotiates with the union, and they are getting good contracts, and everybody over there agrees it is the best thing that ever happened.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

He is jealous because you are so successful.

MR. GILBERT:

That is right. Certainly he is.

Members opposite are trying to force the situation on us by saying if we do not pass Interim

Supply by six o'clock today there is going to be a serious problem. There is no problem. As I told you, we have four days. There is no problem.

MR. SIMMS:

What four days?

MR. WARREN:

What about Grey River?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

Could we have order?

MR. GILBERT:

I would like to speak in silence, please!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Could we have silence while the hon. member is speaking, please?

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Chairman, if you cannot keep them quiet, ask them to leave. I know there is a problem and I know that we have tomorrow, and Wednesday, and Thursday, and Monday. So the argument that we have to close this House today otherwise people will suffer, that decision has to be made by that side right there. We are prepared, as the Leader of our party and every other member who spoke on this side said, to stay and debate this, to point out the fact that it is a serious problem. We cannot get answers in Question Period, we cannot get any commitment that government is going to take a serious approach to negotiating a settlement with those fellows who are out there on the picket lines.

What I am saying, and all on this side are saying, is we are prepared to come back, we do not mind. You have got until next

Monday, so do not use the argument that if Interim Supply is not passed today it is the fault of the Opposition. The Opposition are prepared to stay here and debate this even though the Minister of Finance would threaten us that if we do not do it his way he is going to cancel democracy in Newfoundland - might is right. Is this what you are going to do? 'We must change the rules', this is the problem we see as far as this debate is concerned.

Now, to get back to my friend, the hon. the Minister of Forest resources and Lands, who has now left the Chamber. I asked him a question on Friday, when I stood to speak in this debate, What was he going to do now that he had an imminent agreement that was going to be signed within two weeks, he said, for the 120 loggers who were laid off down in Bay d'Espoir? He got up and made a personal attack on me. I think I would like for him to now answer the question to see what he is going to do for those 120 workers. Is the Forestry programme, the F.E.S.P Programme still in effect? Will those people be rehired? Those are the questions I would like for my friend, the hon. the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, to answer. I am sure the people of Bay d'Espoir are waiting for an answer to that. They do not want to join the other 1,700 people who are unemployed down there. They, at least, had a semblance of a job and, as I have said before in this House, an unemployment cheque provides a lot more dignity than a welfare cheque. Those people were at least ahead of that.

This is why I am standing here, and we are standing here as the Opposition, to point out to members opposite that there are

serious problems in Newfoundland. The One right now was brought about because of the arrogance and the lack of consideration -

MR. TULK:  
The contempt.

MR. GILBERT:  
Contempt, I suppose, is a good word. Thank you, my colleague from Fogo - the contempt that this government has shown for the people who are on the picket line. We have the Department of Transportation people out on strike. The next thing, without any effort to negotiate, we heard the President of Treasury Board say that he had gone for an injunction and then the very next day he very arbitrarily and without any more negotiation said, "If they are not back here by twelve o'clock tomorrow, they are going to be suspended for thirty days."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I do not think that was really a good way to start off negotiations in this strike. I have some experience in it, as I told the hon. members a little earlier, and I know what is done.

You do not start off with a club, you sit at the table and you negotiate, and this is the point we have been trying to make here ever since this House opened.

DR. COLLINS:  
I thought your workers almost threw you in the harbour.

MR. GILBERT:  
You need not worry about my workers. You can come out and visit them any time at all and they will tell you what a great place it is to work. The other nice thing I would like to point

out to members is that I am one of the few people who are employing Newfoundlanders, and have for the last fifteen years. I have no worries about that. I have thirty Newfoundlanders working for me, how many have you got working for you, up front?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:  
Not in the backroom somewhere, companies you are in that nobody knows about, up front. Come on! I have no problems with my workers. My workers are up front and working. You can come and ask them are they not happy to have a job in Newfoundland today.

MR. CHAIRMAN:  
Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

The hon. member for Fogo.

MR. TULK:  
Mr. Chairman, let me make a few remarks just to try and point out to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), the person who is responsible for the financial affairs of this Province, a fallacy. He may not realize it, he may be operating in ignorance; the hon. gentleman is a likeable fellow and I do not believe he would do what he just did to this Province unless he was ignorant of the facts. The fact of the matter is, the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) chose to open this House on February 6 to bring in the Atlantic Accord and to do other pieces of legislation, money bills, and one of them, as the Minister of Finance knows, is the Loan and Guarantee Act under which this government passed out money in 1984 that today they

still do not have the legislative authority to pass out. The Minister of Finance knows that. What did we see on February 21? We saw the Government House Leader walk in here and close her down. Why? Because the Atlantic Accord was not coming off to be the sweet-smelling little rose he thought it was going to be and they were feeling the heat in the kitchen. He closed here down on February 21 and he makes this big announcement that he was going to open on March 18. He sent this letter to myself on March 10 saying he would like to have Interim Supply debated for three days only and we replied and told him that if we got good answers from the government we would give him Interim Supply and, also, we wanted to see labour relations improve in this Province and the strike ended, or at least an effort made to end that strike. Well, what did we see? We saw confrontation.

Let me say to the Government House Leader that it is the height of arrogance for him to write a letter suggesting that Interim Supply should be passed in three days, but that is what we have come to expect from the government. Let me also say to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), and let me point it out very, very clearly, that if the government had kept the House open from February 21 until today and they had brought in Interim Supply at any point in time before the last of March, the seventy-two hours allocated - if we so choose to use them - to the Opposition in the Standing Orders of this House would have long since elapsed and he would have had his supply. But this is typical of the mismanagement that goes on here. What happens in this House is

typical of what is happening in the Province. There are very poor relations with the Opposition in the same way as there are very poor relations with the labour people in this Province, and with some business people whom they do not like. The Minister of Transport (Mr. Dawe) knows what I am talking about when I talk about certain business people in this Province who are not very well liked by the Minister of Transportation. They will take a swipe at them, but if Air Canada comes into Gander and wants to do whatever it wants to do at Gander, then we get a meek little Telex going up to the Federal Minister of Transport. That is the type of government we have. If they do not like you, shut up, do not say a word.

Now let me point out to the Minister of Finance again that if they will make, as the Leader of the Opposition said, a genuine attempt, which they have not done, to settle the labour relations problems that exist in this Province, and if they choose to give us some answers to questions, they can have Interim Supply by March 31. As the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir so ably put it, the truth of the matter is that tomorrow we will get the Budget, Wednesday is Private Members' Day - by the way, there has been no request made to us to give up Private Members' Day.

MR. BAKER:

Not a request. Do you know why?

MR. TULK:

I know why, and I suspect you know.

MR. BAKER:

The tickets are already bought.

MR. TULK:

The tickets are already bought for going down South.

MR. BAKER:

That is the reason.

MR. TULK:

Oh, is that the reason?

MR. BAKER:

Yes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TULK:

Maybe there is another insidious reason here. Maybe the government is under so much heat that it is looking for an issue to get out to try to blame the poor old Opposition for not running the Province. That is what they are trying to do over there, they are trying to blame us for not running the Province. Well, Mr. Chairman, any time they want to come over here and sit down and send us over there to administer the Province, we will do it. We will do the job for them. We will see that March 31 does not roll around and there is no Interim Supply. We will see that that happens, because we will plan, we will do the work that needs to be done.

So I am now saying to the Finance Minister and to the Government House Leader, Wednesday is there, Thursday is there, -

MR. EFFORD:

Saturday.

MR. TULK:

Good Friday, surely we will take that off. Sunday is there, Monday is there, if you want to come back. Do you want to settle the labour relations problem in this Province? Do you want to do that? No.

DR. COLLINS:

Do you?

MR. TULK:

No, they want to get out of here again. Surely the responsibility of the Opposition is to be in a place where they can pressure government into doing the things that should be done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

There is nobody in this Province today who would not agree that the labour problems should be solved. But if they can get the Interim Supply Bill through and get out, then, Mr. Chairman, we may see this strike go on indefinitely. That is the name of the game, shut her down, take the heat off so we can run off down South somewhere. The holiday plans must have been made. Well, Mr. Chairman, we have some news. We are not going to be bullied by the Government House Leader, and the Minister of Finance, and the Premier into giving up our rights as an Opposition. Not at all. We say to them, and we say it to them quite clearly, if you want bills to pass in this House you have to act in a democratic fashion, you have to plan and you have to do things according to the way they are supposed to be done, not according to the way you want to see them done.

Mr. Chairman, having said that, let me ask the Government House Leader to give the people on that picket line a sense that there is a democratic society in this Province; let me ask him to lift the suspensions that the bully from Mount Pearl pushed out so quickly, treating people in this Province, people who are underpaid

in this Province like children.

The Minister of Justice (Ms Verge) issued an injunction that she comes in and pleads ignorance of in this House. Let me ask him to lift those suspensions, let me ask him to give us a schedule of when parity will be given to those people, equality. His Premier, his idol, spent years -

MR. SIMMONS:

His puppet.

MR. TULK:

Yes. Now that may be more like the truth. The real Premier may be sitting in the chair right now. But his Premier or his puppet kept going across this country asking for equality for Newfoundland in Canada when in his own Province today he will not give equality to people who are working with his own government. Now, how hypocritical can you be? And he even has the gall to come into this House and say, 'Oh, the unions are partly to blame for the lack of parity.' The unions are to blame! Well, I have to tell him that the wage freeze that was put in place two and one-half years ago was not put there by the unions in this Province. The wage freeze was put there by the Premier. I can remember a little scene on CBC television where, after the Premier had had his press conference, or shortly before he was to go to the press, he called in the union leaders and said in his typical, arrogant fashion that there was a wage freeze on. Is that where the lack of parity, the lack of equality might have come from? Is the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) afraid of an industrial inquiry in this Province? Does he have something to hide? No, that is not it. There is a typical

Tory attitude in this Province that if you are not Tory and if you do not bow to the wishes of 'Brian' and 'Bill' and a few of them, nothing is going to happen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:

Well, the Government House Leader can take it as notice today that there is an Opposition in this Province that will not be bullied or told by him what has to be done. We will protect the rights of Newfoundlanders.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Greening):

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Chairman, what an impassioned speech!

Now, let us get to the kernel. The hon. gentlemen wanted us to keep the House open in February so that we could debate Interim Supply and we would use up all the seventy-five hours. So they would prefer to debate in a vacuum, which is fitting and appropriate to the space between the hon. gentleman's ears, rather than debate Supply as they should debate it, with the full estimates put before them. Interim Supply is for the interim, and most times, Interim Supply has gone through in the past and should go through with just general observations with respect to the amount of the bill, and any wise Opposition would reserve the residue of the time, because it is



all debated out of the time for consideration of estimates, the seventy-five hours, so that they could debate it in a rational, intelligent fashion when the estimates were put before the House. And the estimates are going to be put before the House tomorrow, Mr. Chairman, this is what we have told the Opposition. I repeat again, we wrote the Opposition on March 10 in an attempt to get a spirit of co-operation and an orderly method of dealing with the governmental affairs of this Province. On Thursday, we told them that the House would open on Tuesday with the Throne Speech. We could not debate government business on Wednesday, being Private Members' Day, but we told them that Interim Supply would be brought in on Thursday. It was, and it was debated. It was brought in on Friday and it was debated, and we asked for passage by Monday in a spirit of co-operation; because this House cannot operate without some type of intelligent addressing of the procedures in the House. And that is the way in which we have conducted the affairs in the House. Now we are invited to bring Interim Supply in a month before so that they can debate it and use up all their time and not consider the main estimates, and we are not going to do that, Mr. Chairman. If they cannot help themselves, we will help the helpless ones. Mr. Chairman, we were also invited, as well, to sit nights. Well, we do not sit nights. One of the reasons why this House has operated very effectively over the last six or seven years is that we have avoided night session unless they are absolutely necessary.

Now the sum total of responsibility to the people of

this Province reposes not only in the government but in hon. gentlemen there opposite. I think we have responded in a forthcoming and a responsible way, as we have indicated. Now, I am, in a moment, as is my right, going to move the Committee rise and report progress, and I would invite members of the Opposition to consider the situation. The hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is going to give his Budget Speech tomorrow, and even though it is not normal in the proceedings to do it, if the Opposition are prepared, we will be prepared to pass Interim Supply without debate, because there has been enough debate to provide that the people of this Province get payment of their monies, so that the recipients of social assistance will not see their cheques delayed, so that those working in essential services will not see their cheques delayed, so that hospital workers will not see their cheques delayed, so, indeed, the hospitals themselves can operate with a minimum of inconvenience.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I challenge anybody, except the most partisan of people, to look at the record, to look at the letter that was written to the Opposition, to consider the fact that some \$106 billions passed in the House of Commons with six to eight days debate, to consider the fact that this is only Interim Supply, on which we have had three days debate - because there will be other days. There will be at least, under our rules, three or four weeks debate in Committee with respect to it - and to ask themselves whether the Opposition is acting in a responsible fashion.

They have chosen the course they

have taken and that is the course they can take. All government has the obligation to do is to govern responsibly, which we have done, and that involves bringing an orderly package into this House for consideration and advising hon. gentlemen there opposite of the time table. They have not chosen to co-operate with it. I hope over the night they will consider it and entertain a motion after the Budget Speech. Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I move the Committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, at 3:00 p.m.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker, returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. GREENING:  
Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole report that they have considered the matters to them referred, have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. MARSHALL:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:  
I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. and that this House do now adjourn.